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A LITERARY AND CULTURAL QUARTERLY

FOUNDED BY
K. RAMAKOTISWARA RAU

EDITOR
Dr. BHAVARAJU NARASIMHA RAO

Vol. 56 April – June 1987–88 No. 1

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TRIVENI

LITERARY AND CULTURAL QUARTERLY
Founded in 1928

Vol. 56 No. 1 April - June 1987

Founded by
K. RAMAKOTISWARA RAU

Editor
Dr. BHAVARAJU NARASIMHA RAO

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INFORMATION ABOUT 'TRIVENI'

'TRIVENI' is published during April, July, October and January—a new Volume commencing in April, every year. Subscriptions may begin with any Number but no enlistment will be made for periods of less than a year.

RATES OF ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

	Surface Mail	*Air Mail*
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Burma and Pakistan	65	Rs. 95
Other Asian Countries	65	95
North America	US $ 14	US $ 22
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Australia	A $ 10	A $ 20
New Zealand	NZ $ 10	NR $ 20
South and Central America	Rs. 65	Rs. 145

INTENDING SUBSCRIBERS are requested to remit the annual subscription in advance. A specimen copy of the current number can always be had on payment of Rs. 12-00 (Post free), and on enlistment the balance of Rs. 28-00 only need be paid to make up the subscription for the year.

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TRIVENI *is devoted to Art, Literature and History. Its main function is to interpret the Indian Renaissance in its manifold aspects.*

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★

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Padma (the Lotus) represents the purity of Love, Jyoti (the Flame) the light of Wisdom, and Vajra (the Thunderbolt of Indra) the splendour of Power.

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EDITED, PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY DR. BHAVARAJU NARASIMHA RAO
AT THE TRIVENI PRESS, MACHILIPATNAM - 521 001

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The Judiciary in a Democratic System

Mr. Justice Y. V. CHANDRACHUD

Formerly Chief Justice of India

There was never a time, which called for greater alertness in order to ensure that democracy serves the public interest. In a way, democracy as a form of government is itself on trial in the midst of the propaganda that it lacks character, efficiency and a genuine desire to meet the needs of common men and women. The answer to these allegations can only be that our democracy is responsive to the public good--not the good of the few but that of the largest number.

The main question to be considered is whether our judicial process has achieved a stable measure of democratisation and humanisation. Democratisation of justice implies that the judicial process must be made available to the common man promptly and cheaply. In the field of law, it is regarded as axiomatic that law in a democracy is a command of reason, the object of which is to achieve the common good. If that be so, it must follow that justice cannot be allowed to be monopolised by the privileged or the economically advantaged sections of the society. The true success of any judicial process consists in its ability to solve the daily problems of millions of unfortunate people who are unequal to the others.

A Unique Approach

The Supreme Court of India has struck a new path in this regard by embarking upon the unprecedented venture of public interest litigation. The court treats post-cards as writ petitions and, after issuing notice to the other side, grants relief to persons who cannot possibly have access to the law courts because of the enormous expense which it involves. Both expense and time are saved by this process. There is always a certain amount of risk involved in acting upon grievances not stated on oath, but grievances supported by oath are also not necessarily true. The judges, with their training and experience, can be trusted to take care of deceptive situations.

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The second important consideration is humanisation in the administration of justice. Today, our country is passing through unforeseen difficulties, but perilous times are also challenging times. The judicial process must stand up to such challenges and ensure that justice is administered with an even hand. The glory of law is that it always lives to fight another day for the cause of justice. Summary procedure has to be resorted to by the trial courts in unprecedented situations. The higher courts, however, examine the record with more than ordinary care for the simple reason that the normal safeguards of a full-fledged trial were not available to the accused.

No Government can afford to condone or connive at crimes which tend to threaten the very foundation on which the edifice of a democracy rests. Whatever may be the end to be achieved, it cannot be overlooked that even the most compelling purpose has to be achieved through a judicial process which is sensitive to the norms of fair play in each individual case. The fulfilment of democratic ideals consists substantially in the faith which the people repose in their system of justice. The fundamental promise is that you cannot put a person in peril of his life without affording to him the substance of a fair trial. The Supreme Court which is the first appellate court in specific matters, ensures that this salient safeguard is observed scrupulously.

Rehabilitation of Criminals

It is also necessary in the field of criminal law to place adequate emphasis on the rehabilitation of criminals. This alone is the manner in which wayward lives can become productive lives. The more the society attempts to perpetuate the stigma attached to a crime, the lesser will be the chance of rehabilitation of the criminal, and naturally lesser will be the number of persons who can be turned into useful citizens. The syndrome of criminality has to be reversed through the medium of the judicial process. For that purpose, the process of law has to move "in the thick of things."

We must resist any sense of frustration or despondency in so far as the working of the judicial process is concerned. We must find courage and resourcefulness to reform the system of law even radically if necessary, so that it becomes an instrument of justice, not a weapon of harassment and oppression. There are infirmities in our judicial process today which, if not cured promptly, are likely to erode the very credibility of our legal system.

In the first place, the system of investigation of crimes as well as the mode of prosecution of criminals must be re-examined.

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Criminal investigation has to be made more objective and independent. At the same time, the trial of criminals has to be more speedy and less ridden by technical rules of procedure and evidence. It is unfortunate that our traditional training teaches us to respect nothing but technical evidence and to believe that our highest duty lies in submitting to it, however much it may be against our inclination and common sense.

One important weakness of our system of justice is that it does not contain a built-in mechanism for mediation and negotiation. Again, it positively discourages the arbitral process There is no provision in any of our laws except in the industrial laws and to some extent, in the matrimonial laws, which makes it obligatory for the prospective litigants to try to resolve their differences through out-of-court settlements. Mighty preparations are made by litigants to take their disputes to the courts and once the court is approached it becomes too late for the parties to retrace their steps. The normal human tendency is to carry a court case to its logical conclusion by fighting to the bitter end. In matrimonial cases, when judges of the higher courts call the parties to their chambers for exploring the chances of a settlement, the most serious stumbling blocks are the frivolous questions put in the cross-examination, casting aspersions on the moral character of a spouse The impression which any observer of the judicial process forms is that the whole process is somewhat isolated or divorced from the realities of life. A constant consciousness of the desire to do justice seems conspicuous by its absence. There is no central philosophy which would seem to guide or govern the steps which the courts take from time to time. Trial judges have to realize that they are not automatons appointed for taking down scurrilous evidence motivated by malice.

A famous judge has said that, while civilization has survived in bygone years without science, there never has been a civilization which has survived without a system of law adapted to its peculiar needs. No society is stagnant, no society stands still and no society can suffer an outrage on decency. Therefore, unless the legal system adapts itself to the changing needs of the people, even the most inveterate faith in law will not assure its viability in the challenging conditions of our time. For achieving this ideal *ad hoc* therapies for isolative trouble-spots are wholly inadequate. What is necessary is to identify the key points for adjustment between the framing and implementation of laws on the one hand and the aspirations of the society on the other. Students of law are familiar with Dicey's notorious formulation that the legislature lags a generation behind public opinion and the courts lag another generation behind the legislatures.

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Procedure, which is the hand-maiden of justice, should not be allowed to become its tyrant master.

Role of the Legislature

The legislature has a very significant role to play in the matter of law reform. In the context of the emerging complexities, a mere guess-work of politicians sprinkled with the skill of the legal draftsman would not be an adequate basis for law reform. The Indian Parliament has to face a herculean task in trying to reconstruct the life of the bulk of its people. The innate opposition of the village community to development plans, the parochial patterns of caste authority and the domination of intrigues based on casteism furnish unmistakable evidence of the chasm between the vision of the law-maker and the inherited social system. The challenge has to be met even if the wheels of law reform grind slowly.

Instead of beating their luminous wings in vain, like Shelley's angel, the lawyers, the judges and the academics must get down to earth and its problems. In the words of Dean Pound, they have all to be social engineers who would keep law and life in a harmonious balance. In the ultimate analysis, the law and its technique are the husk, not the grain. The grain is equality. Therefore, protection of human dignity has to be one of the fundamental endeavours of law and equality in human affairs one of its vigorous impulses. Law, undoubtedly, is a science of language but, it is not mere words which sustain the law. Words remain empty unless they are complemented by practical action.

In the context of the goals which our Constitution envisages, the concept of justice has assumed a new significance. A system of justice accessible to all and responsive to the genuine public interest is indispensable to the functioning of a democracy. Therefore, justice has to be a dynamic rather than a static concept. It must imply an affirmative or positive action rather than the mechanical application of disembodied statutes. In that sense, justice is both the end and the means to an end. The value of the courts as instruments of justice depends upon the wisdom of those who use that instrument. A sense of confidence in the courts is necessary to maintain the fabric of liberty for a free people.

These are some of the challenges to the judicial process in a democratic polity. We must find wisdom and courage to pursue our endeavour to meet these challenges. The ultimate goal which has to be achieved through the judicial process is the creation of a just society. No sacrifice can be too great to ensure that every body has a roof over one's head and gets at least a square meal a day. Law must live to fight for these goals.

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THE COUNTRY TAMIL CHASTE

SUBRAMANIA BHARATI

Rendered into English by K. C Kamaliah

Even while uttering "The Country Tamil Chaste",[1]
Sweet honey fast fills the ear in haste.
"Our Fatherland this is," while we say,
In a trice in bosom swells energy sway.

Abounding in scriptures is the Tamil Country;
Ingrained in valour high is the Tamil Country.
Resembling the heavenly damsels in love,
Youthful maidens in plenty throng the Tamil Country.

The Kaveri, Palar and South Pennai,
The Vaiyai of Tamil fame and Porunai[2]
Watered by the many rivers aforesaid
Made fertile is the sacred soil of the Tamil Country.

The Tamil Country is of the venerable sage,[3]
Whose abode is on the high ranges,
Protecting with care the three limbs of Tamil.[4]
Whatever be the kinds of wealth on the face of the earth,
All those the Tamil Country is endowed with.

Standing sentinel on the beach of the blue wavy sea,
The Virgin Goddess[5] continues her eternal penance on the Cape,
Between which and the Hill of Maal[6] in the north
Lies the Tamil Country dense with fame.

Foremost in learning is the Tamil Country,
Where the renowned Kamban[7] was born.
The fragrance of a good variety of learned works,
The Tamil Country sends forth to all corners of the earth.

Giving unto the world as a gift Valluvan,[8]
Earned fame sky high this Tamil Country;
Adorned herself with a diamond necklace,
The heart-warming Epic of the Anklet.[9]

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This motherland is of those, who colonised the islands—
Sinhala, Pushpaka and Java ;
Where they hoisted the Tiger and Fish Standards
And established their hegemony.[10]

The Tamil Country was of those valiant heroes,
Who had the strength to strike
In the Himalayas piercing the sky, [11]
Who waged war and subdued the Kalinga.[12]

Unto China, Misiram and the Yavana homeland,
Its fame spread, besides many more countries.
Art and knowledge, warfare and trade —
The Tamil Country patronised their growth.

Notes

1. Country Tamil Chaste - Centamilnaadu.
2. Rivers flowing in Taminaadu : South Pennai - *Thenpennai* ; Vaiyai - *Vaigai* ; Porunai - *Tambraparni.*
3. Sage Agastya.
4. The three limbs of Tamil - Muttamil, i. e., *Iyal* - literature; *isai* - music ; *Koothu* - drama.
5. Kanyakumari.
6. Hill of Maal - Tiruvenkatam. Vishnu is referred to as *Maal* in Tamil literature.
7. Kamban - Is the author of the Tamil *Ramayana*, known as the Emperor of Poesy - *Kavi-c-cakravarti.*
8. Valluvan - Tiruvalluvar, the Bard of Universal Man, the author of *Tlrukkural*
9. Epic of the anklet - The Cilappathikaram, the author of which was the Chera Prince Ilango Adigal, who became a Jain Monk.
10. Tiger and Fish standards were the flags of ancient Chola and Pandya monarchs respectively.
11. The Chera King, Cheran Cenkuttuvan subdued the Aryan rulers, Kanaka and Vijaya after imprinting the Bow, Tiger and Fish emblems on the Himalaya Mountain.
12. The Kalinga ruler was defeated by the Chola army of invasion under the leadership of Karunakara Tondaman for failure to pay tribute. The expedition is the theme of the celebrated war called *Kalingattu-p-parani.*

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SRI AUROBINDO'S SONNETS
A Thematic Study

Dr. ATMA RAM AND D. BINDRA

Sri Aurobindo was a prolific writer. In a very short time, apart from short and long poems, sonnets and lyrics, he also composed the prose epic *The Life Divine* (1939-'40) and the epic poem *Savitri* (1950-'51). This last work has received much critical attention during the past many years. However, much work has not been done on his other writings. Some of his short and longer poems, and especially the sonnets, have remained singularly untouched. In volume number five of the *Commemorative Volumes* set brought out by the Sri Aurobindo Trust in 1971, as many as seventy-seven sonnets have been included. Of these fifty-nine sonnets are dated. These dated sonnets are characterised by symbolism, transcendentalism and spiritualism. In this article our endeavour is to examine, in brief, the thematic content of these "dated" sonnets.

In his book *Indian Writing in English* (1962) K R. S. Iyengar makes a brief reference to just one sonnet, "The Dream of Surreal Science". V. K. Gokak writes about the same sonnet in his work *Sri Aurobindo: Seer and Poet*.

> The fifty and odd sonnets in which Sri Aurobindo expressed his spiritual realisation and, occasionally, his moods of exquisite satire, are noted for their simplicity, directness and intensity of language. The sonnet called "A Dream of Surreal Science" speaks humorously of glands producing a Shakespeare, a Buddha or a Napolean and ends with the couplet:
>
> A scientist played with atoms and blew out
> The Universe before God had time to shout.[1]

Apparently, the author had nothing more to say by way of criticism on the sonnets of the seer-poet. He starts his comment with Sri Aurobindo expressing his spiritual realisation through the sonnets and then finds only a satirical sonnet to end with. However it is not advisable to regard this particular as a measure

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of the calibre of the real poet. Because "his was no ordinary man's consciousness; it was definitely something deeper and higher".[2] As D. V. K. Raghavacharyulu mentions, "Sri Aurobindo's grand architectonic powers representing the aristocratic acuity and open transcendentalism of Indian metaphysics projects a complex mosaic of experience, consciousness, vision and prophecy, symbolic of a total ethos, as it is initiated and extended into a new historical dimension".[3] Our endeavour is to establish the relevance and importance of the fact that Sri Aurobindo's works represent the development of his thought and experience. The sonnets too are a record of his spiritual adventures in various stages; these express, as for him art should, "the inner spiritual truth, the deeper not obvious reality of things, the joy of God in the world".[4] These show that the intellectual and spiritual powers of the seer, instead of being impaired with age were all the more crystallised.

The fifty-nine dated sonnets can be divided into two main categories. Some sonnets contain general observations on the spiritual tranquillity, the Divine Kingdom within or the relationship of the soul and the Absolute. In others we find that a realisation of the Ultimate Reality has descended upon the poet and there is a complete identification of the seeker's soul with Brahman. In a few sonnets the reader finds that the poet experiences some kind of a struggle for release from the material bonds. However, it is difficult to find such a struggle in the poet's life. He was a Yogi, head and shoulders above the average human being. A Yogi follows up his aim through a series of rigorous Yogic meditations and such stages as struggle for release are almost inconsequential for him. Sri Aurobindo too at one stage must have felt and overcome his attachment with the material world. Most of his sonnets embody concrete experiences in the metaphysical plane. However he is able to harmonize these super experiences with his existence on the physical level. In fact, "the Aurobindonean evolutionary transcendentalism is not a scorner of the earth".[5]

For convenience we number the dated sonnets under consideration from Nos. 1 — 59 in their chronological order as they appear in the *Commemorative Volume*.[6] In sonnets Nos. 15 and 35, that is "The Iron Dictators" and "In the Battle", we find traces of this struggle and the desire for release from the material for union with the Absolute. The poet is in search of the Infinite whom he cannot find either in "this helpless swirl of thought" or in "life's stuff of passionate unease." In the "Iron Dictators" Sri Aurobindo presents the adventure into the godhead as being threatened by "The iron dreadful four who rule our breath." However his firm faith strenghtens his adventure.

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Thou, only Thou, canst raise the invincible siege,
O Light, O deathless Joy, O rapturous Peace.

In "In the Battle" (No. 35) he takes up the battle of the seeker's soul to attain the godhead The poet knows that even though partial defeat in such a battle throws him backward he gains some "vantage" in his passage:

For Thou hast given the Inconscient the dark right
To oppose the shining passage of my soul.

When the seeker's soul presses on with the challenge and continues the quest, the spirit feels as if it were being surrounded and crushed from all sides; the titanic forces of the temporal world are arrayed around him in a warlike action:

All around me now the Titan forces press;
This world is theirs, they hold its days in fee;
I am full of wounds and the fight merciless,
Is it not yet Thy hour of victory?

The stage of unfulfilled desire and struggle for release must have been enjoyable to the seeker, since, he has already silenced the opposition within his inner self. He remarks in the sixth sonnet "The Witness Spirit":

I dwell in the spirit's calm nothing can move
And watch the actions of Thy vast world force.

This resulted in the composition of as many as twenty-seven sonnets depicting that tranquil state when the poet approaches the stillness, the immobility, the spiritual tranquillity as opposed to the tormenting flux characterising the theatre of this material world. It is advisable here to consider some sonnets that characterise this note of spiritual tranquillity. In "The Divine Hearing" (No. 3) the poet catches a glimpse of that Being and identifies himself with all and all things with himself: "All sounds, all voices have become Thy voice." Consequently,

A secret harmony steals through the blind heart
And all grows beautiful because Thou art.

The poet feels that this universe is just a tiny spark of that supreme Brahman and this supreme Being is present in each of us. The poet realises the presence of Brahman in all and is able to share with the agonies and sorrows of each of the millions of inhabitants therein. In "The Indwelling Universal" he observes: "I contain the whole universe in my soul's embrace." He sees himself in all and all things in himself. The superb identification is complete. "The Witness Spirit" allows the reader to undergo a unique experience and he soars with the subtle body of the poet. Here the poet speaks of that moment of spiritual tranquillity when

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he is completely detached from the temporal, and has aroused the *Kundalini* within him. This "mute, stupendous energy" enables him to achieve a moment of calm when he is not disturbed by the material glare around him:

I dwell in the spirit's calm nothing can move
And watch the actions of Thy vast world force.

He describes such a state in "Cosmic Consciousness" (No. 11) where he has "wrapped the wide world in my wider self/ And Time and Space my spirit's seeing are." Later on, in the same sonnet he remarks that "All nature is the nursling of my care." This identification can be achieved only in an exalted tranquil state.

The echo of the Eternal silence is reflected in such lines in "The Word of the Silence" (No. 25)

A bare impersonal hush is now my mind,
A world of sight clear and inimitable,
.. ....
But now I listen to a greater Word
Born from the mute unseen omniscient Ray:

The effect of such contemplation is expressed thus in the closing couplet of the same sonnet:

All turns from a wideness and unbroken peace
To a tumult of joy in a sea of wild release.

"A Dreem of Surreal Science" (No. 34) dated 25 Sept. 1939, is somewhat satirical in tone. Here the poet gives us an insight into the working of the Infinite. The first quatrain describes Shakespeare and Homer at work, while the second deals with the Buddha in meditation and also with the enlightened one. Sri Aurobindo then moves on to Napolean—"A brain by a disordered stomach driven" who disturbed the peaceful and calm existence of so many innocent beings in Europe. This quatrain, however, could also be an oblique reference to the devastating second world war which had just begun, that is in Sept. 1939. This statement can be tentatively made on the basis of the couplet which follows:

A scientist played with atoms and blew out
The universe before God had time to shout.

This couplet, though humorously worded may also refer to a much more serious event which was to follow some five years later: the dropping of the atom bomb over Hiroshima in Japan by the Americans. At times Sri Aurobindo could achieve mental and spiritual calm without much physical or active meditation. On the occasion when he visited the Takht-i-Suleiman in Kashmir, there, without any seeming effort, he experienced the vacant Infinite

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in a very definite way. The experience left a deep impression upon his mind and resulted in the fiftieth sonnet "Advaita"

I walked on the high-wayed Seat of Solomon
Where Shankaracharya's tiny temple stands
...
Around me was a formless solitude;
...
A lonely calm and void unchanging peace
On the dumb crest of Nature's mysteries.

The experience was deeply felt and remained etched on the poet's mind so as to become a source of poetic inspiration.

The elevation of the seer-poet's soul towards the Supramental Plane is expressed in twenty-nine sonnets. These sonnets depict the moment of the union with the Divine. This group of sonnets incorporates reflections into the vast cosmos within him and the experience of submission to the call of the Infinite. The poet's soul becomes a plaything at His hands:

The spirit's infinite breath I feel in me;
My life is a throb of Thy eternity.
("Bliss of Identity", No. 14)

Or as in No. 6, "The Witness Spirit":

All this I bear in me, untouched and still
Assenting to Thy all-wise inscrutable will.

The poet defines his identity in a vision of the Divine:

A momentless immensity pure and bare,
I stretch to an Eternal everywhere.
("The Self's Identity", No. 27)

Quite often Sri Aurobindo catches a glimpse of the Infinite in everything around him and then:

A secret harmony steals through the blind heart
And all grows beautiful because Thou art.
("The Divine Hearing")

Rigorous *sadhana* has resulted in the arousal of the innate hidden energy within his own being, which

.. rises from the dim inconscient deep
Upcoiling through the minds and hearts of men,
Then touches on some height of luminous sleep
The bliss and splendour of the eternal plane.
("The Witness Spirity", No. 6)

And he assents to the inscrutable will and the sublime pleasure of the Absolute, be it painful or blissful The former aspect is reflected thus:

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The body burns with Thy raptures sacred fire,
Pure, passionate, holy, virgin of desire.

("Divine Sense", No. 54)

While the immense pleasure is evidenced and crystallised in "Krishna", No. 22:

Nearer and nearer now the music draws,
Life shudders with a strange felicity;
All nature is a wild enamoured pause
Hoping her Lord to touch, to clasp, to be.

In "Shiva", No. 24, the aspirant soul views with pure delight the passion-dance of the Creator, whereas in "The Bliss of Brahman", No. 39, the soul is "drunken with the glory of the Lord" and has "looked alive upon the Eternal's face." This is not a euphoric state. The poet's active and conscious meditation forms the basis of this experience. In "Liberation", No 10, we find an absolute identification with the Infinite. The progression develops in this way:

I have thrown from me the whirling dance of mind,
And stand now in the spirit's silence free;
...
I have escaped and the small self is dead,
...
And have grown nameless and immeasurable.
...
My mind is hushed in a wide and endless light.

The loss of Ego is experienced in this state of stillness and at long last there comes the identification:

I am the one Being's sole immobile Bliss:
No one I am, I who am all that is.

The poet's soul has elevated itself to a stage where the descent of the godhead into his being is possible. The "golden light" transports him into a state of perfect bliss. As he says in "The Golden Light", No. 12:

Thy golden Light came down into my brain
...
Thy golden Light came down into my throat,
...
Thy golden Light came down into my heart:
..
Thy golden Light came down into my feet:
My earth is now Thy playfield and Thy seat.

The poet is suffused with this mystical glow. This is an experience unique in itself.

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In some, the sonnets reflect the various experiences—mental, intellectual and spiritual—which the poet had been undergoing from time to time. A number of sonnets have been composed in a single day, while at times there is lapse of one, two or even three years. These could have been periods of suspended animation. If Sri Aurobindo had not been composing sonnets during these periods, his mind and thought were not static but were undergoing constant development. It is generally accepted Sri Aurobindo marked 24 Nov. 1926 as the day of *siddhi*: the descent of Krishna or the Consciousness of the Overmind into the physical. This means that from this moment onwards he had undergone a variety of experiences. It is these adventures and experiences or as Walt Whitman called them, "adventures with the Self," which are dealt with in the sonnets

It may here be pointed out that there is a difference between Whitman's "adventures with the Self" and Sri Aurobindo's multitudinous experiences on the transcendent plane. Whitman's adventures with the *Jiva* and *atman* are radically different from those of the seer-poet.

> Closer yet I approach you,
> ....
> Who knows, for all the distance,
> But I am as good as looking at you now,
> For all, you cannot see me?
>
> ("Crossing Brooklyn Ferry")

The above lines indicate the shadow of an experience. A slightly deeper adventure with the *atman* is presented by Whitman in "Out of the Cradle Endlesaly Rocking." Here he has symbolically represented his Soul's desire for the Maker in the image of the "feathered guest from Alabama."

> O throat, O trembling throat,
> Sound clears through the atmosphere
> Pierce the woods, the earth,
> Somewhere listening to catch you, must be the one I want.

But the desired union is not attained. In "Passage to India", Whitman merely gets a glimpse of the realms beyond the material plane. Also there is no doubt that he must have had some awareness out of the ordinary. Otherwise flow and spontaneity in a poem of some length is rather difficult to achieve. Whereas there was a constant effort on the part of Whitman to release his soul from its temporal bonds and transcend the physical, one finds no such conscious endeavour on the part of Sri Aurobindo. Sri Aurobindo's poetry begins on that note at which

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Whitman's ends, because in each sonnet the seer-poet has already transcended the physical. This naturally imparts greater spontaneity to his sonnets.

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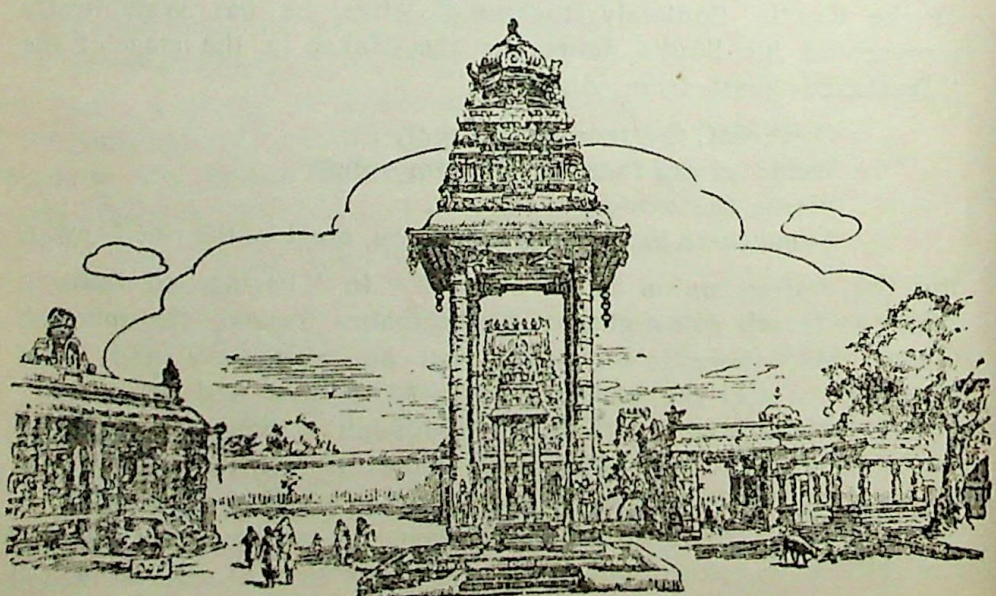

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WHEN THE SUN IS STABBED ....

AVANTSA SOMASUNDER

Though the poverty is dancing ferociously
At least the fresh rays of dawn
Lend some solace
Therefore, the day passes along somehow

Mutual affections, throwing lovely rays
Fill the heart with cool breezes
And soothe the self
So, the day can be spent somehow;
Though miserably.

The Sun anointing with silver light
Shines up there in the sky
Aiding the underdogs below
Hence, the day proceeds
However dreadful and cursing.

But, alas, now —
When some unknown malignant forces
Have ghastly murdered the Sun,
In the shadowy corner
Beyond the western mountain,
Ah, there's a heart-shaking pool of blood
In the western mountain slopes
And fearful stains of blood
All over the cheeks of the world!

All my hopes encountered
This inhuman edge of a twilight
Gleaming like a flame of the funeral pile.

When the shades of dusk
Are still loitering in the threshold
Of the sweetness of life
I cried trembling with fear
That the prison of this night
Tortures me as a captive!

(*Translated from the original Telugu by N. R. Thapaswy*)

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Ananda Coomaraswamy and Indian Cultural Resurgence

Dr. SHANTI SWARUP

When the present century had opened Indian art in its own land and amongst its own people was hardly reckoned as art. It was regarded as something worthless, primitive, decadent and grotesque. Scholars of Indian art who were at this time invariably European and mostly British saw it peopled by hideous-looking many-armed and many-headed gods and goddesses, with the little that possessed any merit in it, such as the Buddha image, imported from Hellenistic sources. And the English-educated Indian, who for everything that he did or thought looked to the west for guidance, had neither the capacity nor the inclination to comprehend and appreciate the aesthetical and technical qualities of his own art. This resulted in a very wrong standard of judgment based on what was understood to be the Western authority, and the conventional Indian art continued to be mis-represented and misinterpreted, and our sincere and sublime achievements of thousands of years suffered at the tender mercies of the unintelligent Philistines

At this juncture a small band of scholars and artists headed by Fergusson and Griffiths, and a little later by Havel, Abanindranath Tagore and Ananda Coomaraswamy entered upon a study of Indian arts and crafts and pointed out a new world of aesthetic thought, in no way inferior to the highest artistic ideals of any other country. Of all these persons Coomaraswamy's work in the field of historical investigation and academic criticism is unique. With a remarkably creative genius he saw things which no critic or artist had seen before, and with patience, scholarship and selfless devotion to the cause of Indian art he gently led the Indians to a better and fuller understanding of their own art and cultural heritage. In less than 300 pages he wrote in his classic work " History of Indian and Indonesian Art ", one of the finest introductions to the history and aesthetics of Indian and

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South East Asian art ever done before. With profound learning and deep insight he analysed the spiritual quality and this deeply philosophical ideology of the Indian sculpture and architecture. Working almost singlehanded and with very meagre material at his disposal he became the first man who successfully defined the various schools of Indian Painting. Before him even the best of art connoisseurs had muddled hopelessly in distinguishing between the Rajput and Mughal paintings. They had no clear idea of the details of dress, ornamentation grouping, facial type, colour scheme and composition. But by indicating the prominent features, significant forms, motifs and technical treatment in them. Coomaraswamy gave our art a basis of classification which remains the ideal today. His book on Rajput Painting is the standard work on the subject. It was Coomaraswamy again who first drew our attention to that aspect in Rajput painting wherein the artist has so beautifully interpreted abstract emotions in line and colour. In his another great work, the *Dance of Shiva*, he tried to show the power of the Indian soul and all riches that it holds stored up. Thus, Coomaraswamy till the last days of his life strove to establish not only the high merit of Indian art but its identity as a manifestation of a superior civilisation. His striving soon began to bear fruits. His writings captured the imagination of the scholars and laymen alike all over the world, so much so that it would perhaps be correct to say that no single man has contributed to the understanding of Indian art and culture more than Ananda Coomaraswamy.

Social Philosopher

But Coomaraswamy was not merely an art historian and critic confined to the world of scholarship. He was also a social philosopher who saw art as an integral part of human strivings for the betterment of life. He did not believe in art for art's sake. His view of art was utilitarian. He believed that art could not be separated from the functions of society. It was on the other hand, vitally necessary in life and culture. He used to say that art contained in itself the deepest principles of life, the truest guide to the greatest art, the art of living. His mission therefore was to explain the relationship between the beauty of art and the basic essentials of cultured living. The artist according to Coomaraswamy is not a special kind of man, but every man is a special kind of artist, or else, is something less than a man.

Ethnically he was a Ceylonese born of a Sinhalese father and British mother; for his education he went to England and took his Doctorate degree in Science; and for 30 years out of his 70 he lived in America. But India was his spiritual home and its art the only means through which he could realise his spiritual

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inheritance. And indeed so deeply concerned was he with India's past glories and present realities that there never came any contradiction between him and the land of art which he loved. He always felt powerfully drawn to all that is best and noblest in Indian culture. He was however not a chauvinist. Speaking at the celebration of India's independence in August 1947 in Boston he said: "Indian culture is of value to us not so much because it is Indian as because it is culture."

Yet, he was intensely Indian in his cultural outlook. He understood the futility of super-imposing western cultural modes and western industrialisation on Indian life. He asserted that such an infliction destroys the people's love of their own literature, their delight in their own arts, their confidence in their own traditional values. It therefore made him very sad to see the rapid deterioration that had befallen the great cultural heritage of India. With biting irony he spoke of the shape of the ideal house in the modern Indian mind which was but an echo of the English suburban villa; he ridiculed the westernised Indians who disfigured the walls of their houses with cheap oleograph and pretended to enjoy shrill records of European music; he could not bear the buying of Brussels carpets by Indians in preference to the production of their own looms; and to him nothing could be more stupid than to blindly imitate English dress and manners without consideration, or to insist that a man shall be considered to be an educated person only when he could express his knowledge in English. Coomaraswamy felt that the art of life in India was ruled less by principles and more by impulse.

The Swadeshi impulse at this time was unfortunately too purely a commercial one, too unimaginative and very heavily based on an ideal of dull prosperity. It was establishing factories for making soap, matches, nibs, biscuits, pottery and the like. But they were not bringing beauty and reverence for what Indians already possessed. Such efforts were not helping the cause of the hereditary skill of the Indian craftsman who could still weave, still build, still work in gold and silver, copper, wood and stones as beautifully and perfectly as had been done for hundreds of years. Speaking of the all-round excellence of the arts and crafts which once reflected India's soul he said, 'Where are the filmy muslins or the flower-woven silks with which we used to worship the beauty of Indian women, the brazen vessels from which we ate and drank, the carpets on which we trod with bare feet, or the pictures that revealed to us the love of Radha and the soul of the eternal snows." Coomaraswamy invoked the Indians to wake up and realise that they can fulfil themselves, only by retaining their Indianness. He said that if a reawakening is to come at all it will

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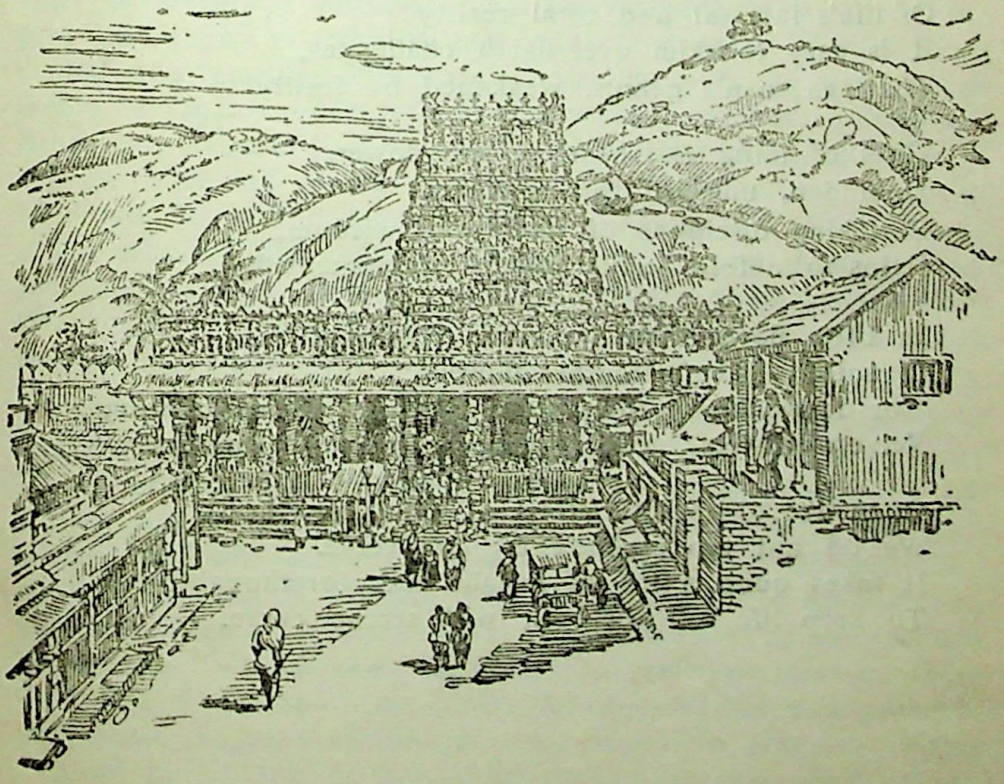
be with fruits of India's recognition of her national self, her national ideals, her traditional culture, specially her arts. Very vehemently he said, "I do not believe in any regeneration of the Indian people which cannot find expression in art, any re-awakening worth the name must so express itself."

In this manner Ananda Coomaraswamy championed the cause of Indian culture throughout his life. With wisdom and understanding he helped to reestablish the glory of Indian arts. With ability and courage he successfully advocated the aesthetic view of life and thought. And as a social philosopher Coomaraswamy provided a leadership in the cultural resurgence of India which was fast losing respect for her traditions. He did not live long enough to see the growth of modern India after she achieved freedom. But he would not have been happy to see all that is happening in India today. He would probably have said, as he had said when he was alive, that it will matter much whether the great ideals of Indian culture have been carried forward or allowed to die, because it is with these that Indian nationalism is vitally concerned, and upon these that India's destiny as a nation depends.



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CULTIVATING PLUS QUALITY

K. V. ADVANI

It is not enough to crave with selfish mind,
Life's prestige, triumph or prizes.
With a superior stamina of mind and heart,
Unfolds plus quality of character, beyond chiding crises.

A normal type of man, incapacitated,
By life's undue stress and chill,
Should be thoroughly conversant with,
Causal factors that create life's sordid mill.

Overt mind avoids deeper insight,
Of life's integral and total reality.
It is easy to skim over harsh challenges,
That tax man's genius, weakened by frailty.

Gifts of mind and heart do not flower,
Unbidden, unasked for or gratis.
Enriching discipline of mellowing wisdom,
Helps to unfold fertile psyche spontaneously.

In life's flower-beds, we avoid crushing,
Or soiling of soft fragrant flowers ;
Nor do we break their stalks to cause their withering.
Velvety flowers, need cooling sprinkle or showers.

Often due to neurotic stress of mind and heart,
We do not tap psyche's creative verve.
It takes quite a lot of insight and forethought,
To keep life, off the boil, with serene curve.

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GOLDING : THE NOVELIST

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[William Golding, the recipient of the Nobel Prize for literature for 1982, is one of the most distinguished writers of the present age. Though his contribution to modern English novel is limited, he still remains a significant and widely recognized novelist.]

Twentieth century is marked with the significant changes in its literary climate. The agony of the post-war conditions compelled the intellectuals to find remedial solutions for the human kind. The established literary values lost their meaning and the prevailing disillusionment and discontentment forced the post-war writers to establish new values and norms of life. Their protest and remedial efforts are revealed through the new experiments in the field of literature. The psychological study of human behaviour, its inner consciousness and its relationship with reasoning and time are shown in the stream of consciousness novels by James Joyce and Virginia Woolf. The writers of the theatre of the Absurd, like Ionesco, Samuel Beckett and Albee pursue the theory of existentialism. Amongst all these masters of literature Graham Greene and William Golding stand out separately with their expert handling of eschatological matters.

Golding appeared with his masterpiece on the panorama of English literature ; and the publication of his very first novel " Lord of the Flies " (1954) put him in the limelight. His preoccupation with basic feelings of good and evil, hell and heaven, and self-realisation sets him apart from contemporary writers. Golding is a highly committed writer and according to him the prime duty of a writer is to enlighten the society through his writing. At the same time he also believes that a writer should take up the theme which no one else has ever handled. " It seems to me that there's really very little point in writing novel unless you do something that either you suspected you

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couldn't do, or which you are pretty certain nobody else has tried before. I don't think there is any point in writing two books that are like each other."

Hence Golding has undertaken a very difficult task to write on an abstract theme and yet make his novels readable. Golding's mastery over poetic exposition has helped him to come out successfully of the risk he has undertaken.

William Golding, born on 19 th Sept. 1911, belongs to a family of teachers. His first interest was in Science fiction. His study of Science fiction developed his thinking but gradually he realised that his real interest was in literature He graduated in 1935 and married in 1939. He then settled down as a teacher at Bishop Wardsworth's School, Salisbury. But deep within his heart there was an ambition to become a writer. World War II interrupted him and he joined the Royal Navy In 1945 he returned from the war and taught English and Philosophy. In 1955 he was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and in 1966 he was awarded the C. B. E In 1961 he went for a year as Writer in Residence to Holline College, Virginia in the Alleghanies. Since 1962 Golding has devoted himself solely to writing.

He got first-hand knowledge of violence, when he was with the Royal Navy during the World War II, but the most painful for him to see was people behaving in a most inhuman and selfish way. They had nothing to spare, not even kindness. This hurt him deep within his heart, and compelled him to think about the absolutes of original sin, basic goodness of human heart, God confrontation and need to meditate on it This deep bruise finds beautiful expression in his writings.

Golding has used his hand at almost all fields of literature. He is a successful parodist. His practice of writing parody has upgraded his original thinking ; his intense study of Greek classics has enriched his writings with poetic beauty. His first publication was a collection of poems in 1934. His contribution in the field of drama and essay-writing will certainly give a glimpse of Golding's literary range, " The Brass Butterfly " (play) came out in 1958.

I

His first novel " Lord of the Flies " deals with the story of a group of children isolated on an island. The children are the only survivors of a plane crash during a war. In the beginning the boys have a rosy picture of the life on the island. Ralph becomes the leader of the group and Jack is given the second place as chief of the hunting choir. This causes a split and Jack

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becomes the chief on his own terms. The group is divided into two : the boys who believe in good and decent are in the group of Ralph and Piggy and the boys who succumb to the evil follow Jack.

Simon, a quiet and withdrawn boy, philosophically surveys the happenings on the island. When Jack and his hunter-party bring the head of a pig, Simon contemplates in his mind that this head of the pig, rotting on its stick is the Lord of the Flies, evil, the dark. The pighead is the symbol of evil, which according to Golding exists in one's own self The darkness and evil do not exist in the world outside, but in the world within.

Jack and his followers are turned into murderers. Jack's hunger for power gives way to his animal instinct, and violence and cruelty become the dominant features of his nature.

As against that the character of Simon is in the centre of the novel so far as the symbol of the pighead is concerned. Simon is described by Golding as " A Visionary " and " A Christ Figure " in one of his essays " Fable ". His intuitive innocence which makes him realise that unruly passion leads to violence and sufferings. Simon loses his life when he goes to convey the message that they should not search for the beast outside, because it lives in our own self.

Ralph and Piggy do not like Jack's violence and Crazy passion. But Ralph is just vulnerable in his position of a leader. In order to maintain the discipline and social order laid down by them, decent Ralph and Piggy join the hunt and the obscene dance arranged by Jack. Piggy is also killed by Jack when he tries to oppose him.

Ralph is devastated by the death of Simon and Piggy. He leaves the kingdom of Jack and sits on the seashore lamenting in the darkness of human heart and overpowering violence and selfishness of human nature Ralph's rescue is also very significant. He is saved, but saved by a soldier returning from the war. He is taken back in the world of sophisticated violence, from where he runs away.

Like Simon, Golding is very realistic in his point of view. He does not ignore the existence of evil, he does not close his eyes at the sight of the beast but he tries to see the beast as a beast He does not preach to us directly about good and evil, but he simply presents before us what man has made of man.

" Lord of the Flies " is a masterpiece of Golding. He calls it a Fable or a myth. The unorthodox theme of the book has proved to be a test case for him, but Golding has survived the test and come out successfully.

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II

In 1955 Golding published "The Inheritors." Golding does not allow his novels to move around on easy popularity. His selection of theme and style of presentation is so strange that his novels are not easily understandable by his readers. He is determined to convey what he wants to convey and hence makes his novels more clumsy and intricate.

"The Inheritors" is written in a highly poetic style. The base of the central theme lies in H. G. Wells's story "The Grisly Folk". In the "Outline of World History", Wells has described the Neanderthal man as possibly the mythological bad man. Golding presents the very opposite view regarding Neanderthal man in "The Inheritors." Wells conveys the idea that the grisly folk can't dream or feel as a gorilla dreams and feels Golding thinks this absurd and describes the final days of a group of "The People." In Wells's story a girl is snatched and killed in righteous self-defence and the Newmen annihilated the grisly folk. In "The Inheritors" aggression is created by the Newmen. Liku and "The New One" are snatched away by the Newmen.

Apemen's is a matriarchal race. They are the children of mother earth. Oa is the symbol of mother earth and represents innocence, calmness and quiet love. Apemen are emotionally and instinctively attached to the mother Oa. Golding's sympathy for Apemen is obvious and he believes that amongst the Apemen there were no tensions and everything was shared

The novel opens with the spring time and the Apemen appear with their leader Mal at their summer quarters high above the waterfall. They are in search of a piece of log to rebuild a bridge. Mal and Ha are the responsible people of the group, whereas Lok is no good for leadership. Old woman symbolises Oa and particularly Lok is more attached to her.

Lok catches the alien sounds but his reason fails to understand or think more about it. Ha, who has gone to collect wood, never returns. Mal also dies by falling into the water while crossing the log. Lok tries to find out Ha, but instead of Ha, he finds the Newmen when he returns. He finds everything is destroyed. Liku and the new one are snatched away. Nil and the old woman are killed. The only survivors are Lok and Fa.

The Newmen are hunters and meat-eaters. They are violent' furious and patriarchal Their belief in superstitious rituals and their masculine wilfulness are completely different from the Apemen's belief in Oa image and their serene oneness with Oa.

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Lok and Fa escape from the world of the Newmen. There is comfort, tenderness and instinctive oneness in their union. As against that the union of Tuami and Vivani is a violent and sadistic one. The Newmen have created a fear for themselves and their want to destroy the Apemen. Fa is barren, but she has a desire to save the new one and mother it to maturity. But ultimately Fa also dies and is lost in the waterfall. Lok wants to save Liku in order to continue their race. But Lok finds out the bones and a small doll, which Liku used to keep in her hands. He comes to the conclusion that those bones must be of Liku. Frustrated and disheartened, Lok returns to his shelter. He lies down, his knees near his chin, looking at the little doll figure like Oa. Lok meekly accepts the changing world and when he fails to continue his own race, he is overwhelmed with sadistic emotions and thinks himself misfit in his new world, so he quietly unites himself with Oa.

Golding here presents two different worlds. One absolutely serene and harmoniously united with motherly tenderness and without tensions. The other is full of violence and superstitions. He allows the readers to visualise his own condition and his affiliation with the Newmen.

The book does not end with the pathetic end of Lok. Tuami is the representative Newman. They move away in the boat from the fearsome world. Tuami is not only a leader of his group but also a thinker. He sharpens his dagger to kill the old leader Marlan and get Vivani. But while sharpening the dagger, he thinks that one can kill a man, but who can kill the darkness of the world? As the boat moves amongst the deep, dark wood, the sun shines brightly. This also has a significance in Tuami's thoughts of darkness and light. Tuami is unaware of his own heritage, but when he sees the little Ape baby jumping and clinging around Vivani's neck, everything becomes clear before his eyes. Tuami with his self-knowledge is not free from his passions of violence and fear. He does not possess the innocence of Lok and that deep veneration for Oa. Golding is very particular in the development of the novel. The two representatives Tuami and Lok, represent the two different aspects of life, knowledge and innocence. With the quiet, lonely and silent death of Lok, Golding advocates the compromising view that the violence of the Newmen and the fate of Apemen are inevitable.

"The Inheritors" is the most poetic novel of all the novels of Golding. His poetic suggestiveness of the descriptions and the significant use of metaphor are at their best in "The Inheritors."

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III

"Pincher Martin" is perhaps Golding's most incomprehensible novel. The intricacy of the novel is an unavoidable factor for the structure and the experiences described in the novel. The central theme and the art of presentation are harmoniously coherent and make the novel technically perfect.

"Pincher Martin" is the extract of Golding's intention of creating a character which is tragic, pitiable yet impressive and mean. The selfishness, meanness and self-centredness of Pincher is revealed in the novel by the flash-backs of his past life.

The novel opens with the struggle for survival of a sailor in the World War II. In the beginning, we are not sure whether Pincher is already dead. This condition continues till the last chapter and in the end some naval officers come to take the body of Pincher. They see that Pincher had no time even to take off his sea-boats. Pincher did not suffer in body, but the book deals with his suffering in spirit.

Pincher's non-existent physical world is described fully and emphasises the fact that the core of the book is spiritual torment and self-awareness. Pincher's present time and flash-backs from his past life lead him to deep understanding and self-realisation. He creates his own world, perhaps hell. He suffers from hallucinations. His constant effort to adjust himself on the rock shows that he has realised his mistake and he is forced to face his essential self. Pincher's confrontation with God and his dilemma in the death-state by the image of a "centre" and the "darkness" is the climax of his agonising experiences. He does not admit the evil in him, although he knows it exists. He tries to justify his living for self and asks for God's mercy. It becomes almost impossible for Pincher to admit the existence of evil in human nature and destroy his own world. The novel moves between the morning and an evening for five days. The morning represents the light, "centre", and the evening represents the darkness, the evil in human nature. Pincher emerges there from the water, creates his own world, names it, but there his power fails. He is unable to create his own self. At one point he has to admit the fact that the darkness represents the truth of his own life and there is a "centre" which is greater than the self. But he will not acknowledge that.

Golding has successfully created the character of a fallen man. The grandeur of the character is to be discovered in the psychological aspect and the ordinariness of human nature. With all the common feelings of greed, selfishness and meanness. With

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this complete reality of man's nature, Golding depicts the facts of life, that darkness can be postponed but ultimately, at one point one has to acknowledge the existence of truth or else he has to suffer in his own created "heaven."

IV

"Free Fall" is perhaps the only naturalistic novel of Golding and is free from his typical style of using too many metaphors. The story is woven round his favourite theme of "darkness" and self-realisation. It is the story of Sammy's confession of self-searching.

"Free Fall" is the story of a painter, like Pincher Martin. Sammy is also suffering from the vice of the self. For Pincher self-realisation was too late, but for Sammy the most tormenting thing is to know about his vices. Sammy very wisely determines to examine himself and is keen for his self-understanding rather than his art. The story is divided into different phases of his life.

The self-examining begins with his childhood. Sammy is an illegitimate child and his mother is a prostitute. His memory reminds him of the days of absolute innocence and freedom from responsibility. After the death of his mother he is adopted by the Rector of the Church. This was surely the end of his innocent, carefree life and the beginning for the moment of responsibility. There is open choice before him and is free to select his own walk of life. The first one is a difficult one, where Sammy has to live a sort of controlled life. The other one shows his free will, always happy with the physical aspects of the world where the return is nil.

The second phase of the story shows Sammy's adolescent period. He talks of his love affair with Beatrice. His love for Beatrice is not free from selfishness. He wants to possess her, he wants to take someone fully under his control. At first his feelings are unselfish but ultimately he falls a victim to selfishness. This fall is also his own choice. For four years he goes on wooing Beatrice, and ultimately when she succumbs, Sammy loses his interest in her. He marries the girl named Taffy, very much contrary to Beatrice.

The third phase of his life is a very important one and turns Sammy completely. The change in his life takes place during war time when Sammy becomes a war artist. He is being interrogated about the escape of two fellow-officers. His interrogator Dr. Holde unknowingly makes him aware of himself. Dr. Holde creates a doubt in his mind regarding his own existence,

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the relative happiness and absolute happiness. He tells Sammy that his life is without any aim, and he is an ordinary man, with only sense-impression as his tool. " You do not believe in anything enough to suffer for it or be glad. You wait in a dusty waiting-room on no particular line, for no particular train. And between the poles of belief. I mean the belief in material things, and the belief in a world made and supported by a supreme being you oscillate jerkily from day to day. From hour to hour[2]." Thus Halde tempts Sammy to reveal the truth, but when Sammy does not tell the truth, Halde puts him blindfolded in solitary confinement. Sammy's fear at the dark makes it difficult to live peacefully and the self-torturing starts.

Thus, Sammy's state of doubt, works as a springboard to absolute self-knowledge. Sammy experiences the darkness of the cell and with that he finds out his own dark world. He craves for the illuminated world. But he has no courage to come out of the darkness. The torment and the fear of "the darkness" become unbearable, he tries to come out of this with all his life force, and this is the moment of his self-knowledge and self-searching. Sammy is transfigured : from the physical level to the spiritual level.

The fourth phase describes the school days of Sammy and the impression of his teachers on him. He makes his choice of the personalities of his teachers. Sammy's easy susceptibility for sex, his love for Beatrice make him believe that sex is the measure of everything and that way he tries to justify the relative values of happiness.

The last phase of the novel reveals Sammy's decision to write his apologies. He is reaping the crop of the moment of his choice. He is free to fall, and so in spite of his self-knowledge, he opts for sex and wants the subjugation of Beatrice. Having been devastated by Sammy she is put into a mental home. Sammy accepts his responsibility and realises his wrong choice.

At the end of the novel Sammy says that there is no bridge between body and soul. He comes out of the cell to meet his interrogator, but there is none His case has been dropped. During the cell Sammy achieved his self-realisation and has experienced his transformation to a spiritual level.

The novel shows the progress of Sammy's understanding from selfishness to self-knowledge, from relative happiness to absolute happiness. The last note Golding wants to convey is that there should be some compromise with the ordinary living, the body and the soul.

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V

"The Spire" is a beautiful symbolic novel. It reminds people of their own humanity and conveys the impression that people should be treated as people and not as objects. Again this is the novel where character is more important and the message is conveyed through the behaviour of the character and the growth of situation. Here Golding allows his readers to examine and observe his characters critically. Like Pincher and Sammy, Jocelin also deceives himself throughout the novel and achieves his self-understanding on his death-bed.

Jocelin is a visionary dean of the Cathedral. In the eagerness of building a four hundred feet high spire on the church, he uses all sorts of immoral means. He believes in using people as objects. The builders of the spire are against it, as they know the inadequacy of the foundation of the church. Jocelin pushes the matter ahead removing all the obstacles at any cost. He has a great distaste for sex but when he sees a builder named Roger and Goody, the wife of a lame cleaner of the Church Pangall together, he thinks of using Goody to keep Roger there. Sex becomes the tool for the fulfilment of his purpose. Pangall is tortured and humiliated by the builders and is ultimately killed.

When Jocelin is deserted by the builders, he realises that they have murdered Pangall. He is confronted with facts, he has ignored so far. After the death of Pangall and Goody's death in childbirth, he realises his own folly in arranging Goody's marriage with impotent Pangall and her relationship with Roger. The spire is built on a weak foundation of the cathedral. Jocelin openly confesses his exploitation of the people, but he believes that it is all necessary. The strong violent wind blows up and Jocelin is afraid that the spire may fall, he himself goes up to the top of the spire to uphold it with faith. At that time again he realises his love for Goody and tries to associate it with the achievement of the spire. This realisation of the truth leads him to self-deception. He tries to justify the role he has played in Goody's life.

Finally, a series of happenings is revealed face to face before Jocelin is convinced regarding the truth lying behind his actions. Jocelin no longer makes a fool of himself He realises that he is also used by his aunt as an object. He thinks that he is the chosen one by God and he has a power to choose others. But it was all deception. His aunt being the mistress of the king uses her powers to choose him and make him the dean of the Cathedral. Jocelin understands that he is also used as he has used others and he is merely a tool in the game of choosing, using and exploiting. The sacrifice of Jocelin is also deceiving. He has misunderstood his sacrifice. "When I threw myself down and offered

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myself to the work, I thought that to offer myself was the same as to offer everything. It was my stupidity".[3] Thus Jocelin realises his own deception and the way he has ignored the truth throughout his life.

In the end he makes a confession before Roger and asks for his forgiveness. But he collapses and on his death-bed he knows the complete truth. In order to fulfil his own desire he has used Goody and Roger, Pangall and Roger's wife too. Here we find Golding's mastery over the poetic use of symbols. A beautiful symbol "The Apple Tree." Jocelin is reminded of a beautiful apple tree blooming with flowers. But his thoughts remind him that besides the flowers and fruits, the roots and branches are also there. There can exist no glory without their support. Jocelin compares his thoughts with this, his desire for the glorious spire and his disregard for the foundation. Jocelin is happy with his confession and accepts his self-deception, his errors and the ultimate truth.

The fundamental point in his novels is self-realisation and the progress from complete blindness towards illumination. Golding talks about darkness and light, self-knowledge and self-realisation, but he does not talk about man's behaviour after achieving self-awareness. His masterly craftsmanship is revealed in the characterisation of Pincher, Sammy and Jocelin. He does not preach anything directly but through the characters of Pincher. Sammy and Jocelin, he talks about the compromise between body and soul. Like Pincher, only the physical aspect of life is also not possible and like Jocelin, pseudo spirituality also cannot exist. The understanding of humanity and, through humanity the harmonious integration of physical and spiritual aspect can lead us to the absolute happiness.

VI

Golding seems to have changed his entire style of writing in his last novel. "The Pyramid." His first five novels are marked by a serious note In fact Golding brings a tinge of comedy from the "Free Fall." Some of the characters in "Free Fall" are both grotesque and moving. But "The Pyramid" is an alloy of comic and saddening expressions. The novel is made of three different stories suitably connected with one another. Oliver, the hero of the novel, feels and experiences all the natural feelings. There is nothing spiritual or complex in his life, as a Pincher or Sammy. The story is told in the third person and deals with three different phases of Oliver's life. The first two stories are connected with Oliver's youth and in the third story we find him a mature man.

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The first story moves round Oliver and Evie. It begins with a note of comedy and ends with a saddening tone. The love theme is strictly restricted to love in the sense of sexuality. Oliver wants to have sex with Evie at any cost. At the same time Evie, who is under the brutal control of her father, lives an absolutely confused and disorderly life, plans to seduce him. After some years when Oliver meets Evie, she reveals her masochistic condition and puts all the blame of her nymphomania on him. Oliver gradually starts understanding her.

In the second story Oliver is an undergraduate devoted to Science and meets Mr. de Tracy, the camp guest producer. Oliver talks about the meaning of existence. This also shows his dilemma over self-assertion.

The third story is a combination of tragic and comic tones. Bounce, Oliver's music teacher, is a spinster. The harshness of her father has made her ungracious and mannish. She is looked after by a garrage owner, who has prospered by Bounce's money. She also feels that she is being used and this feeling creates mental disorder. To get affection from Henry and draw his attention towards her, she drives her car recklessly, but ultimately, unfulfilled and unsatisfied, she walks nude in the street.

Oliver as a mature man, visits Bounce's grave and understands that she was an unfulfilled woman. The sadistic end of Bounce's life makes him realise the worldly practicality that " pay one must but no more than a reasonable price ".[4]

" The Pyramid " is the only book in which Golding is free from his original mood, yet in the third part of the story, his typical style and mood is clearly visible. This tragi-comic mood is not continued till the end. The story reveals the slow process of Oliver's self-awareness.

VII

Thus Golding tries to switch over from serious to a lighter tone in his last novel, but he, being basically an Aeschyleam, preoccupied with human tragedy and absolute happiness, fails to do it successfully. In his first five novels Golding does not allow any liberty or concession to easy reading. The undercurrent of all the six novels remains the same and that is self-realisation. Golding is greatly moved by the inhumanity of war time and his brooding over the futility of earthly happiness and the basic faith in humanity finds religious exposition in his first five novels. The strong moral tone of his novels has earned him the prestige of a religious writer. His sense of religion is not confined to rituals and the church but embraces better human life and its understandings. Golding's use of symbols shows his myth-making mind.

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Though he excels in the technique of the novel form, his narration, and treatment of the subject sometimes become incomprehensible because of the many myths and symbols that he uses. But in spite of the intricacy of the plot and descriptions, his poetic and mesmerising imagination and aesthetic pleasure have earned him a classic value. With his limited literary output, Golding has made himself predominant in the galaxy of the post-war British writers.

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2. Free Fall, p. 76.
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THE RIVER'S DRIFT

R. Y. DESHPANDE

Much depends upon the river's drift :
The paddy-green or the bird-song,
The bankless solitude of love,
Or behind the bright poppies
Gleaming images of the unborn child.

Changes in the night-sky are swift:
Sometimes, thrust from one arm,
A million swords pierce the clouds;
Sometimes the tiger-months pour
Relentless flames as though
The dark woods of death were burning.
The unruffled sea is a precious gift.

River, I love your landscapes
Bringing sounds to quietude
When these timeless mountains
In your delight faraway drift.

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DEATH-WISH LIGHTED IN THE DARK

BRAJAKISHORE DAS

Death-wish lighted in the dark
drifts into your
intestines; you know
the bizarre experience
is too deceptive
to be silenced or severed
to rythmic numbness. You are
reasonably frozen inward, while
an acute pain gnaws at
your flesh, your exterior.
However much you try
to ignore the wound, you can't;
you can only bury it beneath
the fossilized debris of
your soul, as you undress
before the broken mirror
in your bedroom. Sheets
of hunger envelop the privations
you swallowed, your
futility still vomiting itself out!
Death-wish shakes
the corridors of living bones,
empties the expanse of
hope's surrealist fount,
and there jumps within you
the hunter thirsting for blood
that oozes from the archetypal intensity
of a strangled horror!
Nobody's really interested
in the irony
of your hyphenated introspection—but
you can see the numbed night
sweeping into
the embrace of an incestuous morn,
and the death-wish dying
slowly, imperceptibly.

— *Translated from Oriya by the poet*

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DEROZIO'S SONNETS

Prof. K. R. RAMACHANDRAN NAIR

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[Herny Louis Vivian Derozio was born on 18th April, 1809 in Calcutta, died on 26th December, 1831 and was buried in the Park Street Cemetery. His father was Portuguese and mother English. Thus he had no Indian blood in him. But he was born and brought up in India, he taught Indian students in an Indian college and the themes and sentiments of his poetry are purely Indian. So Derozio is, undoubtedly, an Indo-Anglian poet. During his brief but exciting life of twenty-three years he was a clerk, teacher, poet, journalist, free-thinker and social reformer. In 1828 he became an Assistant Master in the Hindu College, Calcutta. However, in 1831 he had to resign the job against accusation by the management that his teaching and influence had corrupted the young minds and that he was a rebel and an atheist. Eight months later, Derozio died.

Derozio wrote lyrics, narrative poems, ballads and sonnets. The present article is an appreciative study of his sonnets though there are references to his other poems also.]

The most well-known among Derozio's sonnets is the one addressed to the pupils of the Hindu College. Derozio was an Assistant Master of English Literature and History in the Hindu College, Calcutta, from 1828 to 1831. During this brief but eventful period, Derozio acquired such ascendency over the minds of his pupils that not only in matters academic but also in private concerns they sought his help and advice. Derozio fostered in them a taste for literature and arts and also awakened them against the evils of superstition and prudery. He asked them to pursue knowledge and seek diligently after truth. He was deeply devoted to his pupils and they, in turn, admired him as their friend, philosopher and guide. In "To the Pupils of Hindu College" the young teacher-poet expresses his abiding

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affection and concern for his pupils, those "young flowers" whose minds are opening "to the freshening April showers of early knowledge." He urges them to assimilate the "new perceptions" and "worship truth's omnipotence" so that a rational generation may evolve attaining "fame in the mirror of futurity."

Derozio's concept of love has the overtones of the Romantics like Scott, Byron, Keats and Shelley. For him love is a noble and all-embracing passion that transcends social and religious barriers. It may be a sudden burst of emotion as in "Love's First Feelings," a dreamy and gossamar concept as in "My Dream" or a mature passion that withstands the vicissitudes of life as in "The Fakir of Jungheera." The delicacy and warmth of love and its celestial energy to transform the human mind are suggested in "The Neglected Minstrel." "The Golden Vase" and "Ada." "Love and song are twins", Derozio wrote and it is the woman who sings through the medium of love.

O, woman when she loves, and truly loves
Can bring its music forth—all its sweet notes
Of hope and fear, love's many griefs and joys.
(*The Neglected Minstrel*)

Derozio knew that love, in spite of its all purifying energy, often creates upheavals in the life of man

this is love—a thing of fear,

And doubts, and hopes, and sighs, and tears,
A feverish feeling of the heart,
A pain with which we are loath to part,
A shadow in life's fleeting dream,
A darksome cloud, a morning beam. (*Ada*)

Derozio's vision of love is tinged with a touch of melancholy and tragedy. Love integrates but Fate seems to play havoc with the fortunes of lovers. "Life's darksome night of unchanging sorrow"[1] spreads its gloom over the refulgence of love. This is so in "The Fakir of Jungheera", "Bridal", "The Maniac Widow", "Ada" and "The Golden Vase."

Several of Derozio's sonnets reiterate this vision of love. Since Philip Sidney addressed Penelope Devereux through a series of love-laden sonnets, several poets in England have used the sonnet as a most effective vehicle for expressing the agony and ecstasy of love. In Shakespeare's 154 sonnets addressed to a mysterious Dark Lady, the sonnet-form reached its highest watermark of perfection, both in craftsmanship and thematic felicity. Derozio's love sonnets express a deep and often

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wounded passion and are centred round an indefinable sense of nostalgia.

In "To the Dog Star" the very sight of the star's "trembling light" evokes rapturous love thoughts in the poet. The brightness, loveliness and etherialness of the star are transposed into the "beautiful and bright" form of the poet's beloved and he feels an exultation in the very contemplation of that most "refined soul / made for tenderness and purest love". In "Romeo and Juliet" the poet identifies himself with the immortal lover and through a process of psychic surrogation exults in the agony, ecstasy and dream of that "consuming fire of love" In "Sappho" Derozio resurrects the tragic story of the immortal Greek poetess whose "love was like the raging of a storm". The poet is moved by the fate of Sappho who wrote fiery love poems and when slighted and wronged by her lover committed suicide by jumping into the sea from the Leucadian mountains. "To the Rising Moon" is a fanciful and delicate identification of the moon hidden behind the trees with the poet's beloved. The ascending "melancholy queen" is presented as having committed some "hidden sin". The poet seems to suggest some unmentionable act of betrayal or momentary lapse on the part of the beloved. Now, out of remorse she is a "grief-stricken maiden" whose guilt stands revealed to all the world, whose "hapless Frailty's tale" can no more be concealed. The sonnet has several Shakespearian undertones in its implied suggestion of disloyalty, waywardness, remorse and agony. In another sonnet [2] the poet addresses a fair lady whom he loved when he was but a boy. The fragrant memories of that adolescent love sustains him now. The consoling nostalgia of love soothes the poet's spirit which is engaged in a perpetual war with a malignant world.

Derozio's love sonnets exhibit a wide range of passion and ecstasy. They are the results of his brooding over a deeply felt personal sorrow at the loss of love or betrayal of love. In all his wounded expressions of love, Derozio has never betrayed any symptom of malice or decline in intensity. His is a love that does not alter with the alteration of love on the other side.

Another important theme in Derozio's sonnets is an anguished meditation on the enigma of life. Life's sorrow, madness and despair as well as its joys and ecstasies find place in Derozio's sonnets. In fact, this is one of the main concerns in Derozio's poetry as a whole. In larger poems like "Ada", "Bridal", "The Neglected Minstrel" and "The Fakir of Jungheera" the poet is painfully conscious of the horror and hostility of this maligant world. Derozio wrote,

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Mark this bleak world, and ye shall find
'Tis cold, relentless, and unkind;
The sufferer rarely meets relief,
But, like the yellow autumn leaf,
Is driven by every fatal gale
Where sorrows wound, and woes assail (*Ada*)

For a poet so young, almost in his teens, Derozio's sensitivity to the shine and shadow of life's experiences was amazing.

The roses of our life must have their thorns,
And storm and sunshine burst on us alike.
(*The Neglected Minstrel*)

"Yorick's Skull" and "Dust" are sonnets that smell of the charnel. The poet dwells on the "humiliating thought" that man who prides himself as the lord of all should come to nothing, his "divine face" reduced to a mere skull. Like Hamlet the poet meditates on the Yorick's skull, the skull that once was a face. In "Dust" we are told ironically that "man is a noble work"; but soon we are confronted with the revelation through a pinch of cemetery dust that man is dust and to dust he must return. Both these sonnets, probably, owe their inspiration to Edward Young's "Night Thoughts" and the melancholia of the graveyard school of poetry of the first half of the eighteenth century. Man's foolish sense of grandeur, his elaborate plans to stretch out a powerful streak through the darkness of existence, his dilatory tactics and his ultimate disillusionment are the sources of Derozio's meditative lyrics.

The sonnet "Scarce has it blossomed" dwells on the transience of life's glories. Hope departs from man's heart with the suddenness with which a rainbow loses its colours

Scarce has the sunlight quivered on the stream
Before a black cloud hides that beauteous beam
Each Iris made of rain with many a ray,
Even as you gaze upon it, melts away.

In "To the Moon" the poet painfully acknowledges the truth that hopes flee from our life leaving behind "thought of sadness in their stead." Observing the travails of the world from above, the moon appears to be pale with sorrow and sympathy, with "a patch of grief on her cheek."

Derozio's meditations on life naturally leads him to a consideration of the other side of life — Death. Certainly the poet loves life and its several experiences. But

... ... there's a strife
My soul has long engaged in — 'its with fate [3]

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With telling irony the poet says, "I must be / Soon in that conflict vanquished.[4] For a poet who was to die within a couple of years at the prime of youth, such utterances sound like forbidding prophecy. There is a lingering death-wish in Derozio's poetry. In another sonnet [5] the poet addresses Death as "my best friend." As if caught in the grip of a consuming apprehension of his imminent death, Derozio defiantly announces

It boots not when my being's scene is furled.[6]

This mood of defiance gradually develops into one of bold acceptance of Death. For the poet Death becomes an ally to circumvent the tyranny of Fate. In fact, Death is his best friend and Fate his enemy. "Death my best Friend" is the finest sonnet Derozio wrote on that theme. It expresses his readiness to accept Death, his intrepidity in the face of Fate's blandishments and above all his effervescent faith in the immortality of the soul.

But man's eternal energies can make
An atmosphere around him, and so take
Good out of evil... ... ...[7]

In another sonnet [8] Derozio wisely accepts the coexistence of good and evil, happiness and misery, joy and sorrow in our life. Fate leaves our mind vanquished and man suffers from memory

.... Human ill
Is with our nature linked eternally.
Man and misfortune are twin-born.

A fitting culmination of Derozio's preoccupation with death is the sonnet "The Poet's Grave" meant to be an epitaph for a poet. The grave stands beside the ocean's foamy surge holding the ashes of the poet who died "cold and unmourned." Nobody would weep for him, nobody would visit his grave, no pilgrim would worship at this shrine

"There, all in silence, let him sleep his sleep" [9]

"To India — My Native Land" and "The Harp of India"

are sonnets inspired by an intense love for the motherland. Though by blood a Eurasian, Derozio had immense faith in India's historical greatness and destiny. He took pride in being an Indian and lamented that

... ... our country writhes in galling chains,
When her proud masters scourge her as a dog.
(The Golden Vase)

"To India — My Native Land" is a glorification of India's past glory and a self-dedication by the poet in the service of the Mother who is grovelling in the lowly dust. "The Harp of India"

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is a lyrical refurbishment of the faded image of India by recalling her ancient greatness. In an age when nobody thought of India's agony under a foreign rule and Indian nationalism was still inchoate, Derozio sang about India's glory and misery with uncommon patriotic fervour. He was the first Indo-Anglian poet to sing of Indian nationalism.

"Morning after a Storm" consists of two sonnets describing the placid beauty of nature after the ravages of a storm in the night. Excellent in their craftsmanship, the sonnets strike a contrast between the stormy, truculent night and the balmy, bright morning. The poet responds to the two aspects of nature—"the desolation laid by the strong spirits of the storm" and the freshness and fragrance on her lovely face. The contrast suggests a "moral lesson" to the poet—an awareness of the twin aspects of nature, her all-consuming power of destruction on the one hand and her sustaining power of beauty, freshness and solace on the other. The travails of the human spirit in a world of sin and suffering until it achieves eternal peace in the sunlight of God's grace is a hidden theme in the sonnets.

"Night", a series of six sonnets, is perhaps Derozio's most ambitious and sustained effort in sonneteering. Most of the major "or evil. In this 'proposition' [illegible] hope, grief, death, oblivion, visualized that the concept of devil has come into existence because it has been demonstrated through human misery, fear and hatred and not because such a thing actually exists. The 'd' of the first letter of devil has been added on, it appears, to evil throuuh the demonstration of a non-existing fact, in a fundamental sense, of evil. Foremost example of such demonstration of evil is the persistence of war in the minds of men even after the holocaust of the atomic destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki has passed off 40 years ago and yet peace as an existential fact has not been established. Perhaps this is also the reason for people to consider that the significance of the spiritual literature consists only in fighting evil and not in the unfoldment of establishment of goodness in man. These two aspects of human nature are complementary but the emphasis that is erroneously placed on evil and violence takes the attention away from goodness or godliness in man.

Humanness as Goodness or Godliness

Goodness or godliness is the same in all beings and hence it cannot be measured by comparison; it is not within the bounds of reasoning which is generally used to separate one from the other, to argue in favour of something in which the separated self has become interested, to criticise that which has gone down in the estimation of the separated self and hence utilized to demonstrate evil in others. Thus morals are erroneously invoked

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5. Sonnet : " Death, my best friend."
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Sonnet : " Misery on misery. "
9. Sonnet : " The Poet's Grave."

leaves our mind vanquished and man suffers from memory

.... Human ill
Is with our nature linked eternally.
Man and misfortune are twin-born.

A fitting culmination of Derozio's preoccupation with death is the sonnet " The Poet's Grave " meant to be an epitaph for a poet. The grave stands beside the ocean's foamy surge holding the ashes of the poet who died " cold and unmourned. " Nobody would weep for him, nobody would visit his grave, no pilgrim would worship at this shrine

" There, all in silence, let him sleep his sleep " [9]

" To India — My Native Land " and " The Harp of India "

are sonnets inspired by an intense love for the motherland. Though by blood a Eurasian, Derozio had immense faith in India's historical greatness and destiny. He took pride in being an Indian and lamented that

... ... our country writhes in galling chains,
When her proud masters scourge her as a dog.

(The Golden Vase)

" To India — My Native Land " is a glorification of India's past glory and a self-dedication by the poet in the service of the Mother who is grovelling in the lowly dust. " The Harp of India "

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Wholeness of Man-World Relationships

Dr. A. KANNAN

There is a constant struggle in man to fight the state of insecurity in himself, and in that process he not only fights the feelings of fear, want and hatred within himself but is keen on pointing his finger at others to demonstrate the prevalence of violence around him. Hence he is unable to make use of the goodness either in himself or in others. Evil, it has been said, has no *per se* existence and in that sense goodness is not the opposite of evil but a *prima facie* existential fact without depending upon the demonstration of goodness itself or the opposite quality of evil. If this proposition is accepted then it may perhaps be visualized that the concept of devil has come into existence because it has been demonstrated through human misery, fear and hatred and not because such a thing actually exists. The 'd' of the first letter of devil has been added on, it appears, to evil throuuh the demonstration of a non-existing fact, in a fundamental sense, of evil. Foremost example of such demonstration of evil is the persistence of war in the minds of men even after the holocaust of the atomic destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki has passed off 40 years ago and yet peace as an existential fact has not been established. Perhaps this is also the reason for people to consider that the significance of the spiritual literature consists only in fighting evil and not in the unfoldment of establishment of goodness in man. These two aspects of human nature are complementary but the emphasis that is erroneously placed on evil and violence takes the attention away from goodness or godliness in man.

Humanness as Goodness or Godliness

Goodness or godliness is the same in all beings and hence it cannot be measured by comparison; it is not within the bounds of reasoning which is generally used to separate one from the other, to argue in favour of something in which the separated self has become interested, to criticise that which has gone down in the estimation of the separated self and hence utilized to demonstrate evil in others. Thus morals are erroneously invoked

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to apply only to beings who are regarded as equal, namely among men only and not to animals. With regard to relationship with man the self-opinion of man categorises the other man as evil if the sense of separateness goes to the extent of regarding colour as a barrier, the status of a widow as a barrier or the existence of conscious and loving animal is meaningless as a living entity and hence can be cruelly treated or slaughtered for food. This kind of reasoning power born out of the sense of separatedness has been used to falsely demonstrate through modern science and technology the evil of the destructive power of atoms in Nature. The power in Nature is not destructive but man adds the non-existent evil to the facts of Nature through his self-imaged and self-opinionated activity; such wasted efforts are returned to him through accentuated feelings of misery, fear, hatred and also the phenomenon of death and destruction.

The goodness or godliness in man has to be established by its inherent resources and not by man's separative tendencies. That is how humanness or true human nature is regarded as whole and not a sum of the parts of the separative actions of man. In this sense we may perhaps interpret J. Krishnamurti as rejecting the value of religion, philosophy, science, the scriptures and corrupted traditions when they try to establish violence or evil in man which is non-existent in the true or whole nature of man. This violence is a violation of true human nature and has to be eschewed totally by denying a place for it in human activity. Fighting evil adumbrated in *The Bhagavat Gita*, *The Light on the Path*, etc., has to be viewed as establishing godliness or goodness in man and not as a struggle for physical existence or survival, neither as a fight to secure trends of human thoughts and activity which might have a seemingly constructive and opposite meaning to destruction and devilry, but have to find their stillness in human goodness and godliness.

This perspective of wholeness has been extended by Krishnaji to consider sorrow, death and the supreme human activity, meditation. He has termed it as the only revolution and shown us the new way of observing, listening and creating or establishing goodness in a state of non-separatedness or wholeness There are trends of discovery in modern science which help us to do away with the fragmentariness in understanding man and the universe and they can be helpful in retaining the integrity of wholeness of man.

Creative, Holistic trends in Science and Technology

The materialistic, polluting, destructive and dangerous activities of science and technology are the result of the interaction with

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man's separative tendencies and have to be eliminated in considering the potentialities of the wholeness of human endeavour. The creative source of science by which new knowledge about man and nature is constructed is the very heart of scientific discovery and invention, and that constructive value can be enhanced only when the application of the discoveries and inventions are used wisely with a view to secure human goodness. This non-separatedness of creativity and created product of scientific activity resulting in interactions with man and society means the permeation of human goodness all along the channel of human endeavour and holds the key to understand the wholeness of scientific and technological endeavour.

Such a holistic trend in the approach of physical sciences is evident when stress is laid upon the unfoldment of an implicate order in the universe to result in the explicate order of the physical phenomena. The sum of discovered laws of nature constitute the explicate order of the universe and is not complete to comprehend the working of the universe and hence the implicate order is posited and explained. This implicate order points to a principle which unites the universe in its wholeness and this principle is more fundamental than the laws. Extending this concept to biology we find that while various organisms live according to particular laws — such as genetics, growth morphology, etc., — which are common to them there are individual variations in the species in their behaviour, etc., which have to be viewed from a more fundamental level of being. "The New Science of Life" of Sheldrake propounds that the pattern of behaviour of animals could be modified by causes effected at a distance thereby pointing to a dimension of wholeness in which biology has to interact with consciousness.

The principle of various organisms living together and preserving the unity of the habitat is expounded in ecology as well as by the existence of the biosphere. Man in his separatist views about the world finds it most difficult to apply the principle of ecology not only in his relationship to nature but more so in human relationships. The human habitat is under constant threat of destruction through demonstration of the demonical evil of weapons and technological tools. The search for goodness or wholeness of man is now carried forward in the public awareness of the threat to the environment and the imperative need for education of man to preserve the goodness in him so that he might inherit the only earth. This education should lay stress upon the integration of the inner environment of man with the outer environment by cleansing the separative tendencies which result in violence and destruction.

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In fighting evil man engages himself in a rear-guard action of battle and in the process he destroys his own defences of construction and products of creation, whereas if he establishes himself in his own fort of goodness he retains the harvest of humanness, creativity and goodness which he has gathered in the past. Only then life is not a struggle and the love of power has given way to the power of love. The kingdom of heaven on earth will not be so far off. Man has to secure his true and whole human nature twice over, namely secure without, i. e., against outside forces of destruction and violence and secure within, i. e., against his own inward subjective nature which is fragmentary and separatist in action.

So the modern awareness to conserve nature, natural and human resources has given rise to a complementary awareness to develop man in his wholeness. This has given rise to the concept of the development of whole man and many developmental programs in the national and international spheres have changed over to this concept. For this concept and awareness to take root in man he has to disarm himself not only of the various types of weaponry he has sadistically devised but also divest himself of all tendencies to regard evil as an existential fact either in himself or in others. Thus he has to initiate himself into true humanism as a *per se* existential fact in many and apply it in his relationships with Nature and man by establishing its supremacy in science, religion and all other whole-time and holistic activities of man. These activities mean that he should not only read, understand and engage himself in the respective creative and constructive activities of science, religion, etc., but must practise them in his life so as to bring out the significance of their wholeness in his life and relationships.

The intellectual awareness of the holistic nature of the universe and the applications of the scientific understanding should become widespread in order to make use of such knowledge by man in ordering human relationships. Such ordering implies the regulation and disciplining of man to the true needs of humanity and without this self-discipline the understanding of the holistic nature of the universe will again tend to become fragmentary because man as a functionary — *homo faber* — becomes separated from his knowledge. Knowledge points in the direction of wholeness whereas man is the limiting factor in the application and use of such wholesome knowledge. We can consider if there are such complementary trends of knowledge which are holistic and relate them to the nature of man himself. Also to consider if such knowledge is being applied with a view to bring out its wholesome benefit in life and relalionship. These trends although

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not clear directions in scientific thought still relate man as a biological and psychological being to his whole nature and such trends can be integrated in the field of education. The integration is to view man and nature as one whole by wisely using knowledge for that purpose and utilizing the resources of the head and the heart.

One such trend has considered the biological cell in its wholeness, i e., the sum of the functions of each of the parts of the cell do not make up or explain the functioning of the whole cell Similarly the sum of the functions of the cells do not represent the function of the tissues nor the organism is the sum of the cells, tissues and organs. The whole body has its own wisdom to regulate its functioning, one aspect of which is homeostasis, and to provide its own immunological defences. The human brain has been closely studied to know the link between the parts of the brain and the other dimension of human activity in terms of his behaviour and psychology. The very structure of the brain is such that holographic model of wholeness has been proposed for it. The left and right half of the brain have different kinds of functions but when the function of one half is impaired the other half supplements it. This study in wholeness has been further extended to posit that the conscious self of man and the brain act in unison and do not have disconnected separate functions. Thus consciousness can be functioning in man even after clinical death of the brain has occurred, and this discovery has been made through scientific studies of near-death experiences of drowned persons brought back to life. Such subjects have been able to retain these experiences and narrate them when resuscitated to life. The new science of life by Rupert Sheldrake does not accept that man's behaviour is conditioned by his genetic pattern alone. In the case of animals it has been established that any change induced in its behaviour pattern can bring about a similar change among other members of its species separated by space and distance. This has the potentiality of application in man who exists in the three dimensions of body, mind and spirit, but he functions in his ignorance as though there is no organic link between these dimensions. Trends in holistic psychology have tried to remove these barriers by taking into consideration those aspects of the psyche as are not amenable to study by experimental physiology and psychology. Psi research has not yet established itself as a scientific discipline but the development of biofeedback and therapeutic touch have shown that man can be his own healer by tapping the resources of his other dimensions. Other branches of holistic medicine have come into existence in which man is not treated on the basis of a biochemical model but as a holistic being

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whose thoughts, emotions and vitality have to be taken into account in their wholeness in order to enable him to live healthily.

Another trend is to go into the learning process deeply so that man is able to integrate within himself and with the outside world. Education forms part of a larger process of learning to be human, and thus integrates man with the evolutionary process having the goal of full humanity. He learns to look upon life as an open book and meets the requirements of each life situation by a complementary resource unfolding from himself. Thus the ancient science of Yoga becomes meaningful in the modern context provided it is viewed as a holistic science and not as a means of enhancing the fragmented world view.

Human Values in Holistic Religion, Science and Education

With the above mention of trends in scientific thought and integration in man the question of values pertinent to humanness arises, especially when the fragmented view denies the value of humanness in its wholeness. Human values are erroneously conceived as securing human rights, peace and freedom from fear, hunger, etc., not by securing within oneself the uprising of hatred, fear, etc., but by fomenting the same in others as well and making preparations for war.

All religions including atheistic religions like Jainism and Buddhism lay primary emphasis upon moral values. In the holistic view morals derive their sustenance from uniting ethical principles with human action but in the separatist context they become dogmatised into cults and sectarian traditions. They further degenerate into superstitions and need the unholy support of authoritarianism. 'Humanness or goodness or godliness as explained already has lost its value in the corrupted consciousness of man to which science has also contributed. The two major tools or keys to civilization, namely religion and science, having failed to maintain the integrity of wholeness of man, education has by and large dropped religion as its resource of knowledge and taken to science in its amoral and materialistic perspective without examining its holistic human potentialities nor is education becoming holistic by integrating the human values derived from science and religion So it becomes necessary to go deeply into the resources of religion and science and utilise the right means of education for establishing the holistic humanness. Integrative education should adopt the overall unifying principle as the guideline in synthesizing concepts, theories, and models of an intellectual nature and integrate it with values of wholeness of an aesthetic and devotional nature inherent in ethics and morals. In sum, it can be stated that we are in a paradoxical situation

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today of having to inculcate the full value of humanness to man although he is born and bred as a human being. However, fortunately the knowledge explosion has spread so widely as to create the awareness among the people in general of the existence of these treasures of wisdom so that it becomes the enlightened task of humanity to imbibe holistic humanness as a deep-rooted concern for the welfare of the world, to include man and nature as a whole.

SPARE ME MY FOLLY

Prof. P. P. SHARMA

I would you rather
took my life
than the last shred
of my folly.
I'm not left with
much that I can
let go of this.
Huge chunks have
been cut away —
only spare the nerve:
the anchor of my selfhood.

In the hard blinding glare
the shadows are shrivelling up,
no sooner are the spirits
perched than are driven away
or beaten up like game.
Where do they go
for replenishment?
Amid the brown churned-up waters
the little green island
like a fragile leaf
is terribly shaking.

If this too goes
I'm done for.
The god I have laboured
to create
will fall dead
with all the splendour
I have put into him
if you, my analytical friend,
strip me of the remnant
of my illusion
which keeps me human.

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MYSTERY OF THE MISSING CAP

(Short story)

MANOJ DAS

It is certainly not my motive, in recounting this episode of two decades ago, to raise a laugh at the expense of Shri Moharana or Babu Virkishore, then the Hon'ble Minister of Fisheries and Fine Arts of my state. On the contrary, I wish my friends and readers to share the sympathy I have secretly nurtured in my heart for these two gentlemen over the years past.

Shri Moharana was a well-to-do man. His was the only pukka house in an area of twenty villages. White-washed on the eve of India achieving independence, the house shone as a sort of tourist attraction for the folks of the nearby villages They stopped to look at it, for none could overlook the symbolism in this operation that had been carried out after half a century.

Shri Moharana had a considerable reputation as a conscientious and generous man. He was an exemplary host with two ponds full of choice fish and a number of pampered cows. He was a happy villager.

Come Independence As is well-known, the ancient land of India has had four major castes from time immemorial. But during the days immediately preceding independence a new caste was emerging all over the country—that of patriots The 15th of August 1947 gave a big boost to their growth. In almost every village, beside the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras a couple of patriots came into being.

It was observed that the small fisheries of Sri Moharana were often exploited in honour of these new people. And observers began to notice that Sri Moharana himself was fast growing into a patriot. As I found out later, he had even nurtured an ambition to be elected to the State Legislature. The incident I relate occurred at the outset of his endeavour in that direction A small boy, I was then on a visit to my maternal uncle's house which was in the immediate neighbourhood of Sri Moharana's.

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In those early days of indigenous ministries there were no deputy or sub-deputy ministers. All were full-fledged Hon'ble Ministers, and Babu Virkishore, who held the portfolios of Fisheries and Fine Arts, hailed from our district. The sponsors of Sri Moharana thought it proper that his debut into politics should have the blessings of Babu Virkishore.

In those days a minister's daily life was largely made up of speech-making at public meetings. There was no need for any specific occasion to accord a reception to a minister. A reception was arranged for Babu Virkishore with Shri Moharana as the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee. Sri Moharana's huge ancestral cane chair was laid with a linen cover on which the most gifted village seamstress had laced a pair of herons holding two ornamented fish in their beaks. The children of the village lower primary school were made to practise a welcome song every afternoon for a fortnight. Among the many strange phenomena wrought by the great spirit of the time was the composition of this song; for the composer, the head-pundit of the school, had lived for sixty-five years without any poetic activity. The refrain of the song still raises echoes in my memory. Its literal translation would be:

O mighty minister, tell us, O tell us,
How do you nurture this long and broad universe!

The rest of the song catalogued the great changes nature and humanity experienced on the occasion of the minister's visit: how the morning sun frequently blushed in romantic happiness, how each and every bird chanted a particular salutation-oriented raga, and with what eagerness and throbbing of heart the womenfolk waited to blow their conch-shells when the minister would set his foot on the village soil.

I know that nowadays ministers do not enjoy such glory. But it was very different then. We the rustic children wrangled over several issues: What does a minister eat? What does he think? Does he sleep? Does he ever suffer from colic or colds?

Shri Moharana himself was excitement personified. He used to be very fond of his hour-long afternoon nap. But he gave up the luxury at least ten days prior to the reception. He devoted all his time to examining and re-examining details of the arrangements; even then he seemed nervous and uncertain.

At last the big day came. The minister got down from his jeep when it entered the very first welcome arch on the outskirts of the village. He was profusely garlanded by Shri Moharana but was requested to re-enter the jeep as the destination was still

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a furlong away. But the minister smiled and made some statement which meant that great though destiny had made him, he loved to keep his feet on the ground! Moharana and his friends looked ecstatic.

While hundreds applauded and shouted Babu Virkishore *ki jai* and *Bharatmata ki jai,* the minister, double the size of an average man of our village, plodded through the street, it seemed to us, to the embarrassment of the poor, naked earth.

And I still remember the look of Sri Moharana when the minister's long round arm rested on his shrunken neck — a look which I have seen only once or twice later in life on the faces of dying people who have lived a contented and complete life. Sri Moharana's look suggested: "What more, what more, O my mortal life, could you expect from the world? My, my!"

All the people—even invalids—for many of whom it was the experience of a lifetime—were alternately shouting slogans and gaping at the august visitor. We, the half-naked, pot-bellied, uncivilised kids walked parallel to the minister at a safe distance and could not help feeling extremely small and guilty.

At Shri Moharana's house the minister and his entourage were treated to tender-coconut juice, followed by the most luxurious lunch I had ever seen, with about twenty dishes around the sweetened, ghee-baked rice mixed with nuts, cloves, etc.

Soon the minister retired to the cabin set apart for him. Though it was summer, the cabin's window being open to a big pond and a grove, there was enough air to lull even an elephant to sound sleep. Volunteers had been posted to see that no noise whatever was made anywhere in the village to disturb the ministerial repose.

I had by then separated myself from my companions. Being rather ambitious, I was eager to be as physically close to the great man as possible. And the minister sleeping was surely the most ideal condition for achieving my goal.

I mustered courage and slowly approached the window facing the pond. This was the rear side of the house. The minister's Personal Assistant and entourage were on the opposite side.

While I stood near the window, suffering the first shock of disillusionment of my life regarding great men—for the minister was snoring in the style of any ordinary man—something most extraordinary happened. Speechless I was already; the incident rendered me witless.

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Through the window I had observed that the minister's egg-bald head rested on a gigantic pillow while his white cap lay on a table near his bed. Now I saw the mischievous Jhandoo bounce towards the window like a bolt from the blue and pick up the cap. Throwing a meaningful glance at me, he disappeared into the grove.

Even when my stupefaction passed I was unable to shout, partly because of my deep affection for Jhandoo (Knowing that the consequences of his crime could be fatal to him) and partly for fear that the minister's snoring might cease. At that crucial moment I was in a dilemma as to which I should value more—the great man's cap or his snoring.

I retreated, pensive But before long I heard an excited if subdued noise. Crossing into Sri Moharana's compound again, I saw the minister's Personal Assistant flitting about like a butterfly and heard his repeated mumbling, "Mysterious, mysterious!" The minister was obviously inside the cabin. Butnobody dared to go in. Shri Moharana stood thunderstruck, as did his compatriots. The Public Relations Officer was heard saying, "The Hon'ble Minister does not mind the loss of the cap so much as the way it was stolen. Evidently there was a deep-rooted conspiracy. The gravity of the situation can hardly be exaggerated. In fact, I fear, it may have devastating effects on the political situation of our country."

I could see Shri Moharana literally shaking. He was sweating like an ice-cream stick, so much so that I was afraid, at that rate he might completely melt away in a few hours.

When I saw Shri Moharana's condition, the conflict within me as to whether I should keep the knowledge of the mystery to myself or disclose it, was resolved. I signalled him to follow me, which he eagerly did. A drowning man will indeed clutch at a straw.

I told him what had happened. He stood dumb for a moment, eyes closed. Then wiping sweat from his forehead, he smiled like a patient whose disease had been accurately diagnosed but was known to be incurable. He then patted me and said, "My son, good you told me. But keep it a secret. I will reward you later."

The incident had thrown a wet blanket on the occasion. The sepulchral silence in the minister's room was broken only by his intermittent coughing. Every time he coughed, a fresh wave of anxiety hit the people in the courtyard and on the veranda.

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I went away to join my friends. They were wild with speculations. One said that the thief, when caught, was to be hanged on the big banian tree beside the river. "Perhaps all the villagers will be thrown into jail," said another. Among us there were naives who even believed that the minister's cap was a sort of Aladdin's lamp, that anyone who put it on would find himself endowed with ministerial power the very next moment.

But the situation changed all on a sudden. I saw the minister and Shri Moharana emerging on the veranda, the minister all smiles. It was the most remarkable smile he had hitherto displayed. By then at least half a dozen caps had been secured for him. But he appeared with his head bare. Even to a child like me it was obvious that the baldpate wore an aura of martyrdom.

Not less than five thousand people had gathered in front of a specially constructed stage when the minister ascended it, that remarkable smile still clinging to his face. Shri Moharana's niece, the lone high-school-going girl of the region, garlanded the minister. A thunderous applause greeted the event, for, that was the first time our people saw what they had only heard in the tales of the ancient *Swayamvaras*, a grown-up girl garlanding a man in public. Then the chorus "O mighty minister" was sung in *Kirtan* style to the accompaniment of two harmoniums, a violin and a *Pakhauj* drum.

Then it was Shri Moharana's turn to say a few words of welcome. I saw him (I stood just in front of the stage) moving his legs and hands in a very awkward fashion. That was certainly nervousness. But with a successful exercise of will-power he grabbed the glittering mike and managed to speak for nearly an hour giving a chronological account of Babu Virkishore's achievements and conveying gratitude, on behalf of the nation, to the departed souls of the great man's parents but for whom the world would have been without the minister.

I was happy that Shri Moharana did well in his maiden speech. But the greatest surprise was yet to come—in the concluding observations of Shri Moharana.

Well, many would take Shri Moharana as a pukka politician. But I can swear that it was out of his goodness—a goodness confused by excitement—that Shri Moharana uttered the lie. He said, his voice raised in a crescendo, "My brothers and sisters, you all must have heard about the mysterious disappearance of the Hon'ble Minister's cap. You think that the property is stolen, don't you? Naturally. But not so, ladies and gentlemen, not so!"

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Shri Moharana smiled mysteriously. The minister nodded his big clean head which glowed like a satellite. Shri Moharana resumed, "You all are dying to know what happened to the cap, Isn't that so? Yes, yes, naturally. You are dying! Well, it is like this: a certain nobleman of our locality took it away. Why? That's what you ask, don't you? Well, to preserve it as a sacred memento, of course! He was obliged to take it away secretly because otherwise the Hon'ble Minister of Fisheries and Fine Arts the brightly burning example of humility that he is, would never have permitted our friend the nobleman to view the cap as anyting sacred!"

Shri Moharana stopped and brought out of his pocket a handkerchief full of coins and holding it before the audience, said, "Well, ladies and gentlemen, the nobleman has requested me to place this humble amount of one hundred and one rupees at the disposal of the Hon'ble Minister for some little use in his blessed life's mission, the service of the people, through fish and fine arts."

Shri Moharana bowed and handed over the money to the Minister who, with a most graceful gesture, accepted it. Applause and cries of wonder and appreciation broke out like a hurricane. Even the minister and Shri Moharana, both looking overwhelmed, clapped their hands.

The minister spoke for two and a half hours thereafter, drinking a glass of milk in between, at the end of which he declared that as a mark of respect to the unknown lover of his, he had decided to remain bare-headed for that whole night although the good earth did not lack caps and, in fact, a surge of caps had already tried to occupy his undaunted head.

Soon my shock gave way to a double-edged feeling for Shri Moharana: praise for his presence of mind and a regret for his having to spend one hundred and one rupees to cover Jhandoo the monkey's mischief.

At night the respectable people of the area partook of the dinner that the Preparatory Committee threw in honour of the minister. Glances of awe and esteem were frequently cast at the minister's head and homage paid to the honourable thief.

But when I saw Shri Moharana in the morning, I could immediately read in his eyes the guilt that haunted him — at least whenever his eyes fell on me. Shri Moharana perhaps had never spoken a lie; and now when he did speak one, he did so before a gathering of thousands! God apart, at least there was one creature, myself, who knew that he was no longer a man of truth.

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The minister, however, exuded sheer delight. He did not seem to notice with what constraint Shri Moharana was conducting himself before him.

At last came the moment for the minister's departure. He was served with a glass of sweetened curd. While sipping it leisurely, he said, in a voice choked with curd and emotion, "Well, Moharana, ha ha! the way things are moving, ha ha! I am fraid, ha ha! people would start snatching away my clothes, ha ha! and ha ha! I may have to go about, ha ha! naked! ha ha! But I don't mind! ha ha! That is the price one must pay for winning love! ha ha ha!"

The minister came out to the rear veranda facing the pond and the grove to wash his mouth. Shri Moharana followed him with water in a mug. Myself excepting, there was nobody in the veranda. My presence was not accidental. A few minutes before I had observed that the rascal Jhandoo, playing with the minister's cap, was slowly emerging from the grove. Seldom had I wished for anything so ardently as I wished then for Jhandoo to go unnoticed by the minister. He was a monkey not in a figurative sense, but a real one. When he was an infant his mother had taken shelter inside Shri Moharana's house in order to save her male child from the usual wrath of its father. Shri Moharana had not been at home and his servants killed the mother monkey. Shri Moharana felt extremely upset, did not eat for one-and-half days, and, to compensate for the wrong done, nurtured the baby monkey, christened Jhandoo, with great affection.

After Jhandoo had grown up a little he often escaped into the grove. He was half domesticated and half wild. He played with everybody, and everybody tolerated him. We children were extremely fond of him.

To my horror, I saw Jhandoo rushing towards us from the other side of the pond. I made an effort to warn Shri Moharana of the impending crisis, but in vain. Jhandoo got there in the twinkling of an eye. He sat down between the minister and Shri Moharana. He put the cap once on his own head; then taking it off, offered it to the minister in a most genial gesture.

My heartbeats had trebled. Looking at Shri Moharana's face I saw an extremely pitiable image—pale as death. The bewildered minister mumbled out, "Er....er isn't this one the very cap taken away by the nobleman?"

And something most fantastic came out of the dry lips of Shri Moharana who seemed to be on the verge of collapsing. "Yes, yes, this is the nobleman .."

His eyes bulging out, the minister managed to ask, "What..... What did you say?.... Well?"

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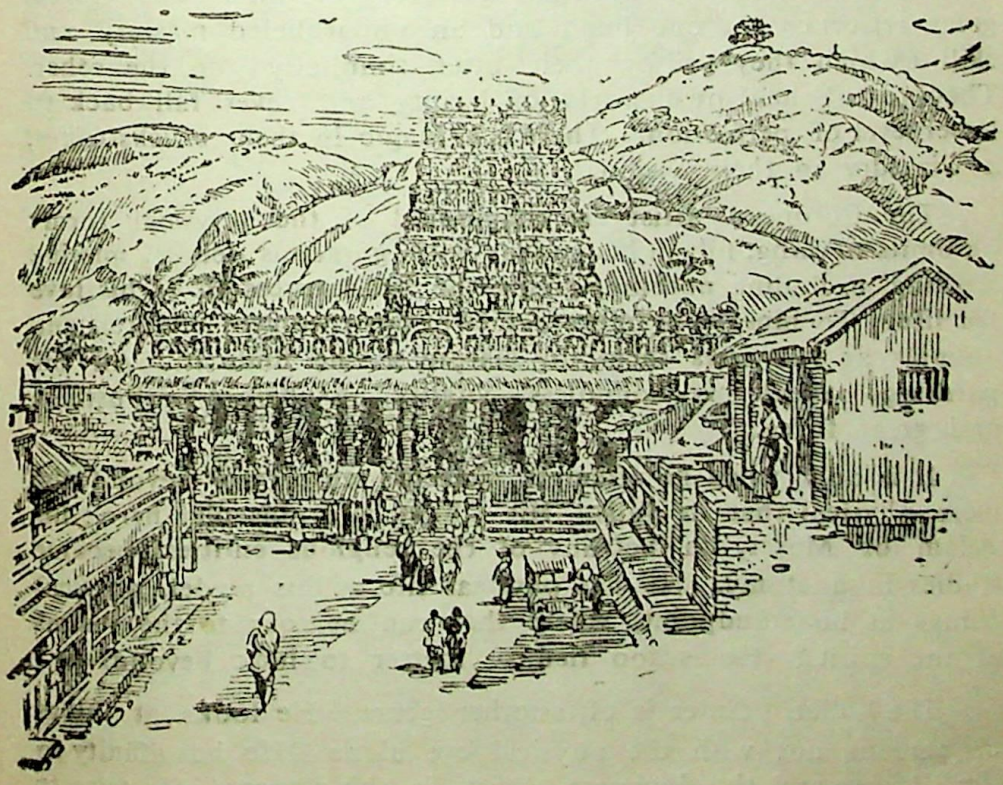
But Shri Moharana was in no condition to say anything more. He broke into tears. Next moment I saw the Hon'ble Minister of Fisheries and Fine Arts weeping too.

The Personal Assistant's voice was heard from the opposite veranda, "Sir, the jeep is ready, Sir."

The minister gulped the mugful of water and walked towards the jeep. Shri Moharana followed suit Their reddened eyes and drawn faces were interpreted as marks of the sorrow of separation.

Shri Moharana's political endeavour is not known to have gone any farther. And it is strange that the Hon'ble Minister, Babu Virkishore, who was willing to be robbed of his clothes, was soon forgotten in politics. I have a strong feeling that it was this episode of the cap that changed the courses of their lives.



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INDIAN PAINTING

ROMEN PALIT

Indian painting, like all things Indian, reflects his character, his nature, his life and his aspirations. It has a definite form of its own like the Chinese, the Japanese and the European paintings. Although all the four have Life as their base and source, each takes a turn which is unique and is revelatory of its natural spirit.

The Chinese and Japanese artists have a rare and unparalleled vision of beauty and, though they are not divorced from life's realities, they transmute all they see and feel, not by gaudy and massive details, but by essential, revelatory outlines. They reveal great reticence on one hand and an unparalleled mastery and skill (which they veil by their utter simplicity) on the other. They reveal their own world of beauty and never fall back to lesser level of perfection. There is a magic in their brushstrokes, a wizardry in their vision.

The European artist is enamoured of the physical form: he omits nothing, fills in his canvas with gorgeous details, missing nothing, excluding nothing, giving the full expression of his love for life. To him life is in the bodies of men, women, children and animals as he views them, in Nature as he finds it. All his paintings reveal his boundless vitality, exuberant robustness and great force.

It is only when he attempts elements which are beyond the mere physical that he fails. His Christ is a muscular hero; his Adam or Moses, in fact any of the religious entities, become studies in anatomy. He has physical life as his model, physical beings as his standpoint, where then can he sour to the realms of the spirit? He is too tied to matter to look beyond.

The Indian painter is of another genre. He looks at things or persons not with the physical eye alone. He has affinity to the Chinese and the Japanese artists in this respect. He tries to

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see what is behind the form, attempts to seize the symbol, the essence that is behind this physical reality.

But he does not stoop to meaningless abstractions, arbitrary surrealism, of futile ugliness that goes in the name of life. We can say, while he is rooted to the soil, he looks beyond into subtler regions of truths that escape the common human sense. He is not a photographer recording physical details, but a creator in his own right who creates his own world of forms of beauty taking stand on actualities.

In the Beginning

There seemed to have been a wave of growth everywhere on this earth, be it in Altamirah in Spain, or cave-paintings in Kaimer range in Central India, or in Bhim-baiyatka in Bhopal or Singhpur in the Madhya Pradesh or in Mirzapur. Central India, it seems, had been the centre of these primitive peoples, at least in India.

Elsewhere too this first creative pulse is felt in Morocco, Algiers, Turkistan, or Australia The theme of these early artists was the same — hunting scenes, animals running, hunters rejoicing over their success, etc. There is no national character in these paintings. The medium employed were earth-colours, plus dyes from barks or leaves or semi-precious stones were used right up to the 7th century in Ajanta, Bagh and Sirigiya frescoes.

We have evidence of early man mixing or grinding their colours on stone slabs In 100 B. C. in Jogimara caves in Raigarh in Madhya Pradesh were found patterns on walls, of fishes and other aquatic monsters. Also hieroglyphs. Much is defaced by weather and time. These could be taken as fore-runners of the cave-paintings in Ajanta which came later. But traditions of Indian painting go much earlier than 100 B. C. In the Puranas and in Buddhistic times there have been definite indications that painting flourished in ancient India. Legends speak of the creator, God Brahma, teaching a king to bring to life a dead boy by first painting the boy's picture and then instilling life in him.

In another legend in the Puranas we have the following myth : Princess Usha dreamt of a beautiful youth. She narrates her dream to her friend Chitralekha who was an artist. Chitralekha executes several portraits of gods, one of these was Aniruddha, the grandson of Lord Krishna.

Indian painting did certainly flourish in ancient India, but it is Buddhism which gave new life and orientation, as Hinduism gave to sculpture and architecture. There is a legend which speaks of a painting on the walls of Gyantse monastery in

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Tibet, representing an artist doing a portrait of the Buddha from life. A copy of this painting was later sent to a neighbouring kingdom. This had such an impact that the king of this kingdom was converted to Buddhism.

In *Vinayaka Pithaka* (300-400 B. C.) there is a reference to *Chitragarh* (picture gallery) adorned with figures and decorative motifs. Such galleries were said to be in existence in the Ramayana age. Later we have Ajanta in India, Ankhor in Siam and Borobudur in Java. These must have been done by kings to please and educate the people. More than that, those artists who executed these works, were dedicated persons. It is in this way they served God. Certainly they did not crave for fame or money; for their names are unknown.

A Tibetan historian Taranath (it is doubtful how much was history and how much was tradition and myth) was of opinion that there were four ages of Indian painting: (a) Prior to the advent of the Buddha excellent paintings were done by gods themselves. (b) In the next age, the age of Ashok the great, we find paintings done by Yakshas — demi-gods. That is, Gandharvas and Kinneras, who lived in the realm of beauty and harmony (the last statement is mine for such concepts were unknown in the time of Taranath). (c) The next age was the age of good people (Punya-Yanas). (d) The last age is the age of Nagas, half-human entities. Their age lasted up to 200 A. D., that is, the beginning of Ajanta-era.

The Indian artist of that age considered that the source of his creation was Viswakarma, the Lord of all arts. In later ages the concept has changed according to his growth

Treatises on Indian Painting

There are numerous works on this subject. But perhaps three texts can be taken as the most representative. The first is *Shadanga*, the six limbs of Indian painting. The second is *Chitra-lakshana*, the modes of painting. And the third is *Shilpa-Sastra*, canons of art. It is not exactly known who wrote *Shadanga*. But that it is very old is a fact, for all artists down the ages, the Hindus and the Buddhists and also the Chinese artists, followed the laws laid down. It is curious that these rules were not written down, but followed by artists as per tradition. It was Vatsayana who set them down in his voluminous treatise, the *Kamasutra*.

The six "limbs" are as follows: 1. *Rupa-bheda*: the knowledge of appearance of forms; 2. *Pramaanam*: Correct perception

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measure and structure; 3. *Bhaava*: Action of feeling or forms: 4. *Laavanya-yojanam*: Infusion of grace, artistic perception. 5. *Saadrisyam*: Similitude; 6. *Varnika-bhanga*: Artistic manner of using brushes and colours. These precepts we shall see, are fundamental to all artists. Without them no true art is possible. These form the framework, like the grammar and syntax in a language, which upholds the artistic creation. Since the beginning of this century, many new waves of art like Surrealism, Cubism, Dadaism, etc., invaded Europe and is coming to India as well. All these movements, in the name of new-creation, try to break these basic principles of art, creating ugliness and monstrosities at which a true art-lover would be repelled.

We now come to the second treatise: "Chitra-lakshana." These are the rules laid out; the painting of gods and kings must be massive and taller than ordinary human beings. A typical example can be taken of Bodhisattwa in cave No. 1 in Ajanta. The standard face should be quadrangular and sharply outlined. It should be beautifully finished. In no case it should be made oval or round or even crooked. Men's faces may be painted in triangular pattern. There was freedom in painting the female form. Only their flesh must be of harmonious proportions and in an upright posture.

The *Shilpa-Sastra* is a book of Sanskrit aphorism on the artistic code. The following details have come down from Indian poetics and art-concept: The eye of the woman is like a lotus-petal (*Padma-paalas*), or like a fish (safari or meena) or like a doe or slit like "Patal" an oblong vegetable. Her ears are like a drooping vulture (*gridhra-sadrisya*); her nose is like a flower of "tila"; her lips are like a flower called "Bimbaadhar"; her throat is lined like the conchshell; her arms are like the elephant's trunk; her breasts are like full-blown lotus; her fingers are like the buds of "champa" (*champa kali*); her thighs are like stems of banana plant; the feet are like lotuses.

The man's waist is like a lion's trunk (*simha kati*); his arms extended up to his knees; his chest is wide like doors (*kapat vakshya*).

These concepts have been taken from Nandalal Bose's *Rupavali*, Parts I and II.

The Buddhist Period

Whatever be the basic tenets of Buddhism, they ushered in a great and glorious age of Indian art, specially in painting. Not only Buddhist India was supreme in India, she became the centre of inspiration and attraction to all the countries around India

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like Ceylon, Java, Siam, Burma, Nepal, Khotan (Central Asia), Tibet, China and Japan. Buddhist art and Buddhist faith always went together. Taranath has commented: "Wherever Buddhism prevailed, skilful religious artists were found." Wherever the envoys of Buddhism went, they carried with them Indian art, the vehicle of Buddhist teaching.

The son of Ashoka the great, Prince Mahendra, and his sister, Sanghamitra, went with saplings of the "Bo" tree, and the words of Lord Buddha. The seeds of Indian art were then sown in Ceylon. A few hundred years later the cave-paintings of Sirigiya were executed.

In 67 A. D. an Indian priest named Kashiapmundugo (This is a Tibetan version of an Indian name) was invited by the Chinese emperor Ming-Ti. The priest took with him a number of Indian art treasures. From this date up to 700 A. D. when Buddhism succumbed to Brahminism, a stream of artists travelled to China. They settled down there and painted frescoes.

Japan too got influenced by this stream of settlers as art of Japan of this period reveals. This influence lasted up to the 15th century.

The Chinese pilgrims Fa-Hian in the 5th century and Hiuen-Tsang in 7th century came to India and took back with them several works of Indian art.

We have three extant examples of Buddhistic art: the Frescoes of Ajanta, the wall-paintings of Sirigiya in Ceylon and those in Bagh caves in Madhya Pradesh. Of the three, Ajanta paintings are certainly the best, both in execution and inspiration. Because the Ajanta artists were moved by the intense devotion to the Buddha, this gave excellence to their works.

All the cave-paintings of Ajanta are not of uniform standard of perfection and also were not executed at the same period. Ajanta caves were discovered by sheer accident in 1819. Hidden in a ravine, these caves remained unknown. The exploration itself took nearly a century from 1819 to 1910 to be completed. As we can gauge by the style, these were excavated and painted or decorated across the span of six centuries. The purpose of this great artistic achievement remains unknown. Perhaps the caves served as monastery to the Buddhist monks, for secluded contemplation or meditation for the ascetic.

Approximately the caves 9 and 10 were excavated and painted in 100 A. D. The pillars of cave 10 were done much later, that is, about in 380 A. D. Caves 16 and 17 were done in 500 A. D. and caves 1 and 2 were executed last in 626-628 A. D.

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According to the historian Taranath many works of the Ajanta caves were done by what he called the "Naga artists" in the era of the king Buddha-Prakash who reigned over the land between 5th and 6th centuries. The name of one of the artists has come down to us His name was Bimbisara, who founded a school of painting in Central India.

Paintings of the caves 9 and 10 were done when the Dravidian kings ruled Deccan from 27 B. C. up to 236 A. D. These paintings have resemblances to sculptures of Bharhut, Amaravati and Sanchi. These paintings reached a marvellous height of perfection. There is vitality in them. The paintings are well-composed and it is presumed that the artists had great knowledge of life. They certainly were devoted artists.

After a lapse of some 250 years, the execution of the next phase of painting began. The paintings were surely more mature and bore resemblance to Gandhara (Greco-Buddhist) style. At that time the Guptas were in power.

Caves 16 and 17 were done at a period when Vaakataka dynasty made a marriage alliance with the Guptas. The paintings were exceptionally fine in what is known as the "narrative style". It is a picture gallery depicting the life and death of the Buddha.

At a later period of time, caves 1 and 2 were painted the last. We can discern that the Buddhistic influence was waning at that time. For example, we have a panel illustrating the Indian King Pulakesin II receiving an embassy from the Persian monarch Khusru Parviz, an event that took place in 626-28. This proves that India's link with Persian was old, even before the coming of Islam.

Cave No. 2 is not remarkable from the point of view of art. The central figures were done by maturer hands, but the surrounding areas and the backgrounds were done by novices.

With Ajanta, Buddhist era of painting came to an end, the most memorable and creative age. What came afterwards are much less in creativity and artistic value.

Mention must be made of two other cave-paintings: Sirigiya and Bagh. The first is in Ceylon; the paintings were done at the time when King Koshyap I reigned, whose 20 wives were painted in the three-quarter lengths in two irregular chambers. This was somewhere in 479-497 A. D. There is no religious significance here, except to glorify some female forms, none of which can equal in beauty and grace the female forms in Ajanta.

The Bagh caves are in the Gwalior State. Perhaps these murals were done in the 6th or the 7th century. As there is no

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Inscription, we cannot ascertain the exact date. The cave is 90 feet square with frescoes everywhere on the walls. The main theme is a musical drama or *Hallasika*.

The Post-Buddhist Age

When Buddhism declined in 700 A.D. the great chapter of Indian painting came to a close. It appears that Hinduism did little to foster painting as such, but instead gave all the attention to sacred sculpture and architecture. In India we have Ellora and Elephanta and in greater India Borobudur, Tibet, Khotan, where many significant monuments were built. Curiously Indian painting or its style flourished in Tibet; India had been then the meeting ground of the Greek, Chinese, Persian and Indian cultures This helped the continuation of the Indian tradition. We have record of the link between Magadha and Tibet up to 11th century. Tibetans painted temple banners (Tangka more or less in the same style as Ajanta).

The Coming of Islam

The period of proper Mughal painting is indeed short, from 1550, that is, from Akbar's time up to the reign of Shah Jehan. Auragzeb dealt the final death-knock to Indian painting. This school is Indo-Sarcenic, having its birth in Samarkand and Herat Although Timur was a savage, as far as art was concerned, his descendants were great patrons of art Painting flourished in their courts. Sultan Hussain of Khurasan was a great connoisseur of painting. Under his patronage Bihzad, known as the "Raphael of the East" flourished. Babar in his memoirs mentions this fact. It was Bihzad's school which was to become later the Mughal school of painting in India. Abul Fazl, the historian in Akbar's time, mentions the following artists under Akbar's patronage: Farruk the Kalmak, Abd-al Samad the Sherazi, Mir Sayyad Ali Tabirz. Also Akbar supported the following Hindu artists: Basawan, Daswanth and Kesudasa. They did portraits of royalties, miniatures and events like tiger-hunts, etc. But all these had an exotic quality which enriched Indian art.

At the time of Jehangir, European travellers, merchants and historians began to come to India, who speak of the emperor's love of art. The painters under him painted portraits and did animal and flower studies; the travellers wrote this fact in their books. Shah Jehan was too busy building great monuments and managing his unruly sons to pay much heed to painting. But with him a style of painting became popular, known as the "Delhi Kalm" or the Delhi brush.

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Though Aurangzeb did nothing to foster Indian painting, his conquest of the Deccan introduced the "Deccani Kalm" in the south. Before the Mughal era died a natural death, it found expression in Patna (Bihar), where one or two families of painters got settled.

After Aurangzeb the Mughal school lingered under the patronage of weak emperors. It revived under the Nawabs of Oudh. This was only a small insignificant incident in Indian art. It left no deep imprint or left no lasting heritage.

With the coming of East India Company, many stranded or needy artists took to miniature painting or portraiture of the Barons of the "John Company" in half-European style. Cheap in quality, whose aim was commercial gain, the paintings have no value except to the historians or the curio-hunters. The roots of Mughal school never really entered deep into the Indian soil. Its exotic nature was foreign to the Indian temperament. But it gave, at its initial stages, some exquisite paintings which remain as landmarks in the history of Indian painting.

The Rajput School and others

The precursor of modern school of painting, the Rajput school, was Indian art unmixed with foreign exotic influences. It reveals marked influence of Ajanta style of painting. There were many "Kalm"s or side schools, such as Jaipur, Bikaner, Jodhpur, Pahadi and Kangra. These artists painted not only miniatures, but also adorned the walls of the palaces of ruling princes. In spite of the hectic political confusion that prevailed throughout Rajasthan from 16th to the 18th centuries, art and crafts grew in Jaipur, Bikaner, Jodhpur, Mewar and Marwad. These artists painted scenes of temple-processions, feasts and festivals and also rural scenes. Work in ivory, brass, bronze and wood flourished side by side, specially in Jaipur

The Jaina artists produced illuminated manuscripts of Jaina tests. In Orissa art flowered, artists painting religious subjects. The artistic merit is dubious. In Bengal the "patua"s produced simple pictures of gods and goddesses and also the local life in the city. In the Punjab, under Ranjit Singh's (1803-30) patronage a school of painters came into being, known as the "Kangra Kalm." Other artists from the Punjab, sponsored by "John Company" produced strange miniatures and portraits in half-European style. As pure art, the works were not up to the mark.

In Hyderabad some artists forced by Aurangzeb's marauding armies settled in the Deccan. These artists created the "Deccani Kalm." They did a number of pictures on semi-historical subjects associated with the rulers. Critics consider these works lacking

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in "breadth and finesse" In Tanjore a group of artists settled there who had some link with the Rajput school. These immigrant-artists were from Maharashtra. During the reign of Shayoji (1833-55), the last of Tanjore Rajas, 18 families of artists and craftsmen worked on ivory and wood, similar to the Jarah paintings of the North. These were done in water colour and encrusted with gems or precious stones. These artists also executed life-size portraits in oils of royalties which adorn the palaces of Tanjore and Pudukkottai.

In Mysore, under the patronage of Raja Krishnaraya Wodeyar, a number of artists flourished who did paintings on ivory. With the death of the Raja the school came to an end in 1868. Mention here could be made of the paintings of Ravi Varma, all done in oils. He did many pictures on Indian mythology. But the quality is poor, and cannot be taken as representative of Indian art.

The Revival of Indian Painting

The revival came at the end of 19th century with the creative genius of Abanindranath Tagore. Many eminent persons were born in Jorasanko, Calcutta, in the house of the Tagores. Sourindranath Tagore gave new impetus to Indian music; Rabindranath gave new life to Bengali literature; Abanindranath and his cousin Gaganendranath opened a new path in Indian art. In fact, Tagore family has played a leading role in the cultural life of Bengal and became the source of inspiration to other provinces. It is not that other provinces lacked creativity in art-form and art-culture, but they produced objects not extraordinary or having vigour of genuine creation.

Abanindranath Tagore: He was ten years junior to the great poet and was his nephew. At the outset he began experimenting in oils and in portraits in the Western style. But these did not satisfy him. He turned to Ajanta and the Japanese painting which had deep impact on him. Further experiments followed and the result was the "wash-process" in water-colour. It was a long and tedious process, for it needed several washes, using the colours in slow process, till they gave out extraordinary depth.

In contrast, water-colour or "aquarelle" as it is called by the Western artist, was a process of applying colours in a single sitting. This was done without pause or break. It was ideal for sketching on the spot. But Abanindranath discovered his own technique, which was neither European nor Japanese in the true sense. Like his students who came after him he painted subjects from the Puranas. Of these "Kacha and Devayani"

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and "Uma" are the most celebrated. Abanindranth was not only a painter, but he was a born story-teller, dramatist and essayist. His books for children like "Budo Angla" or "Rajkahan" are standard works in Bengali literature.

Nandalal Bose : The chief student of Abanindranath, Nandalal had unique freedom of mind. No two pictures of his are the same. After his apprenticeship with his master, which was at the beginning of the century, he got the post of a teacher in Oriental School of Arts in Calcutta. From now on, he was on his own. And he went forth painting numerous pictures — of these the Shiva set, the Rama set and other Puranic creations are unique. In fact, all his pictures are a class by themselves. From 1920 till he died in 1966, he was in charge of Kala Bhavan in Shantiniketan, where he taught students from all over India. His paintings are of divers kind and hence it would be difficult to pinpoint his style, which changed according to the picture or the subject He executed everything with supreme ease and mastery.

Ashit Kumar Haldar: Ashit lacked the variety that Nandalal had. His production is not so copious Two of his paintings stand out as the most original and revelatory : "Nature mysterious" and "Krishna and Yashoda."

Kshitimohan Sen: He was a Vaishnava at heart and as an artist. He has done many beautiful paintings on the life of Shri Chaitanya. Although he was a finished artist, his knowledge of human anatomy was not sound, hence all his pictures are not perfect. He died in poverty.

Mukul Dey : His works are not numerous. But he had mastered both the oil painting and water colour. His portrait of Sri Aurobindo is good, but not outstanding.

Gaganendranath Tagore : Gaganendranath Tagore, though a cousin of Abanindranath, was not anybody's student. He developed his own style. He usually painted straight with the brush without any preliminary pencil sketch. He was prodigious in his output. He has done the life of Shri Chaitanya, also city-life, surrealistic and cutistic pictures and cartoons. In all he did, he put his peculiar stamp of originality. He died as a paralytic cripple.

Pramodakumar Chatterjee : He learnt from many masters. He has painted pictures on the Mahabharata, Ramayana and the Puranas. He had his distinctive style. He held many jobs in Baroda, Masulipatam and Calcutta. He travelled widely, specially in the Himalayas and Tibet. He wrote a number of books on travel and fiction, also a few books of biography on the Tantriks. It would be difficult to pinpoint which of his paintings was the best.

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Debiprasad Roy Chowdhury : A painter, a sculptor, a writer and a man who loved his food, wine and women, Debiprasad had many talents. He would specially be remembered for his sculptures of eminent men which adorn the cities of India. He was the Principal of the School of Arts and Crafts, Madras.

The Ukil Brothers : Sharada, Barada and Ranada Ukil, had a school of painting in Delhi in 1930s and 1940s. Sharada developed his own peculiar style, which is known as the "Oriental style". He and his brothers were facile artists, paying little attention to details or anatomical perfection. In 1935 Barada, Ranada and Dhiren Verma went to London to paint the friezes of India House.

Abdur Rehman Chagtai: His paintings were exotic, romantic and typical Persian in style His colourings are subtle and deep, but as is common with many Indian artists, he lacked perfection in human anatomy.

Jemini Sen: A master in his own right, he revived the "Patua" style of the last century, using bold colours, bold outlines and simple in composition. He had a new genre of painting which is unique in its own way.

Ramendranath Chakravarty : He was the Headmaster of Indian School of Painting in Calcutta. He specialised, apart from water colour, in etching and dry-point. His most notable picture is "The Marriage of Siva."

Sunayani Devi : She hailed from the Tagore family. She did not execute many pictures. She did simple pictures of female faces. We are reminded of Greuze's portraits in comparison.

Apart from these artists, we have a long list which might tire the reader. We mention some: Chintamoni Kar (He did a painting of Mahakali which he sent to Romain Rolland.), Sudhir Khastogir, Manishi Dey, Bijan Bihari Mukherjee, the blind artist, Ramgopal Vijayvargiya, Veerabhadra Rao, Chitra, Ravi Shankar Raval and Kanu Desai of Gujarat, Amrita Sher-Gill from the Punjab, Deuskar from Shantiniketan. It would not be out of place to mention Atul Bose. He was a portrait painter of great eminence. He painted life-size portraits of King George V and Queen Mary which adorn the Buckingham Palace.

Modern Indian Painting

Painting today in India has lost both the tradition and originality we found a few decades earlier. Lost in the morass of commercialism on one hand and vague, meaningless abstraction on the other, the Indian artist is lost. He either apes his Western fellow-artists or goes in for money. If we look around we can find numerous examples.

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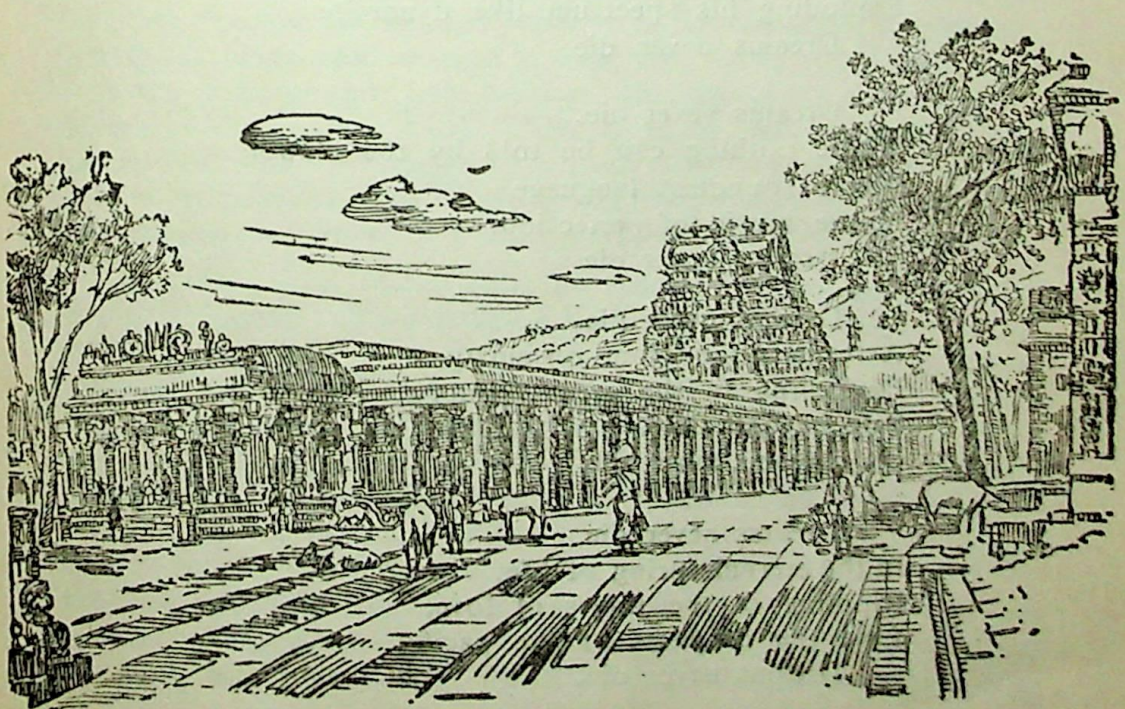
The Indian artist, at heart, does not know what he wants. He has lost sight of his ideal, and he is not aware which way he and his art are moving. He is dissatisfied with the past, but he is yet to discover sure anchorage in the present and the future. His life style and his greed for money have plenty to do to his present condition. He has no genuine goal before him. Talent he has, even some artists are geniuses in a loose sense; but these he employs to yield money, position and fame.

The artist of the past had his goal before him and he had something which he lived for God or society. The modern artist has imbibed his cult from the West and his credo has become materialism. Specially for the Indian artist, it should not be so, for he has a definite tradition behind him, a great heritage he has inherited.

Some rare Indian artists are there, who are few indeed, who have vision and aptitude. If they have courage, they can forge a new path in Indian art, a truly great art. These few artists we expect can give us something of value. Theirs will be the faint streak that will become one day the day of a glorious future.



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DREAMS NEVER DIE

MANAS PAL

Dreams never die,
Amid the gloom of darkness,
The restless spirit moves,
Overflowing streams of consciousness,
Dreams never die.

Dreams never die,
In the deep pathos of mortals,
In the long rainy night,
Listening to the music of rain drops.
Dreams never die.

Dreams never die,
In the vision of a cancer patient,
Counting the hours of perdition,
Exploding his spectrum like dynamite.
Dreams never die.

Dreams never die,
Where nothing can be told by the mouth.
Where soundless language
Is the music of perfection.
Dreams never die.

Dreams never die.
A resurrection from obscurity.
Darkening in the great memory;
Safe beyond time.
Dreams never die.

Dreams never die,
In the eternal spring of life,
Rippling in the waves of love,
Like the deepness of the pacific,
Dreams never die.

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REMEMBERING J. KRISHNAMURTI

Immortal Teacher of the Twentieth Century

K. S. RAMANUJAM

Jiddu Krishnamurti, well known to his admirers throughout the world as *Krishnaji*, was a rare phenomenon of our times. As a philosopher unearthing and expounding basic truths of human life and its purpose, he was unique. As a teacher of the profound inner meanings of human existence, he was patient, painstaking and persuasive. As an uninhibited and outspoken interpreter of human problems, he was an original thinker, *par excellence*. As an individual human being, he was always gentle, caring and loving, undisturbed by any kind of self-consciousness or self-importance. All his long life of ninety-one years, he was a living example of nobility, truthfuless, integrity, austerity and simplicity; indeed, he was a true personification of love and compassion. Absolute fearlessness was his *forte* while propounding his revolutionary teachings which sought to free man from the shackles of enslaving beliefs and false values. He was a true and great messenger of peace on earth. "Be a Light unto yourself" was his insistent, life-long message; he was that himself and wanted all of us who had had the benefit of listening to him intently to have this valuable experience by means of fearless self-experimentation.

Forcefully and unceasingly, he wanted us to get involved in the fascinating and challenging quest for self-knowledge which alone could make for meaningful existence on this earth. Although this is what had been advocated by many other seers and sages before him, and the scriptures of all the numerous religious faiths over the ages had also said so, he was different. He alone asserted that this pursuit had to be undertaken without any aids, however sacred or holy. Perception of self-knowledge had to be direct to be meaningful. Pointing out that without this self-knowledge we are all second-hand human beings, he declared, "Word is not the thing; you have to transcend beyond the word, which is thought, which again is the product of memory,

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the past, to understand and realise what your true self is, which alone matters." His passionate commitment to enlighten us on the value of self-knowledge as the only path worth pursuing has left its imprint in a lasting manner.

Relevance of Krishnaji's teachings to our daily life cannot be over-emphasised. He pleaded with us to cultivate and sustain a global outlook and a global feeling for all humanity in all our thinking and action, insistently saying: "You are the world and the world is you." As a seer who had walked alone, all his life, in the golden path of self-knowledge and self-realisation, he had been convincingly asserting that it was there for everyone of us to tread if only we dared and acted fearlessly. He had maintained that happiness came out of one's capacity to feel deeply, to enjoy simply, to think freely, to risk life and to be needed. He had seen enough of name and fame to know and to tell us that it created as many problems as it solved and that flowering of goodness in our daily life is the only thing that ought to deeply concern us. That indeed was the life-force which had to be cultivated and nurtured all the time. All of his life, Krishnaji had explored deeply into man's evolutionary nature and questioned all or many of our most precious assumptions. He exposed us to the fact that all the beautiful sentiments in the world weighed less than a single beautiful action. It was his constant endeavour to awaken us to ever new vistas of truthful meaning of what life is and how to live it with love and compassion in our hearts. He wanted us to put away all self-centred activity and concentrate on universal good. He showed to us how life without order is empty.

Krishnaji's adherence to truth had been continuous, however arduous and painful. He broke off from his mentor and benefactor, Annie Besant, courageously disclaiming the role of a world teacher which she had lovingly built up for him over a period of two decades straining herself to the extreme He declared then: "Truth is a pathless land and one had to traverse it alone." What rare courage of conviction and supreme sacrifice!

Many years ago, when some influential individuals and powerful groups of intellectuals in the western world wished to propose his name for the highly prestigious Nobel Peace Prize, Krishnaji firmly declined to be nominated since he was wholly against any such recognition for himself or his work in any manner by any one. Henry Miller, the tempestuous writer of some of the finest prose to emerge from North America, in an insightful statement once said: "Krishnamurti has renounced more than any man I can think of."

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How do we make Krishnaji's teachings meaningful in our own lives? It is in the realm of "relationship" that he felt we could start experimenting with ourselves. Stressing right relationship as the most valuable and essential pre-requisite of joyful living, he advocated infinite patience and everlasting forgiveness to make it friction free. Total eschewing of any hurt feeling, avoidance of comparing one another, elimination of jealousy, hatred and prejudice had all to be simultaneously faced with perceptive watchfulness which he described as being in a state of "choiceless awareness" He wanted us to make goodness attractive and flowering all the time in all our relationships, be it in the office or at home, in our daily life. For, he pointed out very frankly that happiness, well-being and security dominated by the material world had proved deceptive and illusory for inward happiness in the human being.

It was given to me to receive Aldous Huxley, well known American author, on behalf of Krishnamurti Foundation, when he visited Madras sometime during the 'Fifties to see Krishnaji. After listening to him, Huxley exclaimed: "... the most impressive thing I have listened to. It was like listening to a discourse of the Buddha — such power, such intrinsic authority."

I shall now give three instances of which I have personal knowledge to enliven my readers' interest in the teachings of J. Krishnamurti.

A friend of ours had lost a highly promising, grown up son in an accident. She decided to go to Krishnaji to talk things over. Step by step the sad event was discussed and Krishnaji helped the lady to see for herself that any amount of sadness and remorse could not wipe out the sorrow and that the ending of sorrow had to come by bold involvement of oneself with some creative activity. She founded a school as a result, and this has given her great courage to face difficulties.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi visited Krishnaji in the winter of 1976 when the Indian sub-continent had been placed under an emergency by her. When the topic came for a review he asked her: "Madam, what have you done; don't you realise that this is the last thing you should ever have thought of to remedy the situation?" This stung her to the quick rather severely and the result was she ordered fresh elections to Lok Sabha early in 1977. Although she and her Congress party were routed on that occasion, she did not blame Krishnaji; for, she understood that he had guided her to act rightly and without fear. So, from then on, every time Krishnaji was in India she met him several times, both while in and out of office, to pour out her heart and seek his wise counsel.

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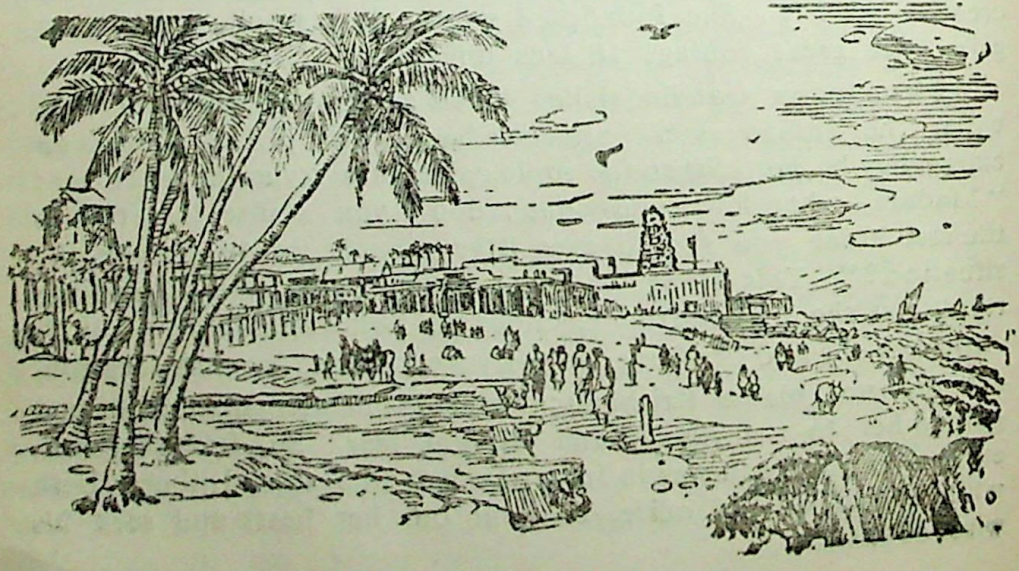
When K. Santhanam was the Chairman of an enquiry committee set up in 1962 by the Nehru government to go into the whole matter of corruption which had grown to ugly dimensions by then, he met Krishnaji to discuss the subject. After an hour-long dialogue Krishnaji exclaimed, "Sir, remember that so long as those in high power and authority are not wholly above board and even above suspicion, there can be no rooting out of corruption." No wonder the report of the committee emphasised this aspect pointedly.

Krishnaji laid great stress on improvement in the quality of education to one of excellence in every aspect of it. He was himself deeply involved with the founding of many schools, five in India, one in Britain and one in America. His dialogues with young boys and girls in the KFI schools was a rare feast to the eyes and ears. He enabled the flowering of intelligence in them.

Krishnaji's long life was that of a swift flowing stream, its quality revealing itself in innumerable beautiful patterns all the time. He was sad that man had alienated himself from nature and had become a slave to materialism and a false sense of security.

Intensively human in his response, he was indeed a becon to all those who had the benefit of listening to his talks and dialogues.



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Nationalism in Malayalam Literature

N. N. PILLAI

The dawn of the 20th century witnessed dark clouds of discontent gathering in the political horizon of India. Indian National Congress had already attracted the attention of the intelligentsia all over the country. The sufferings caused by the first World War and the magic of Mahatma Gandhi's appeal brought the issue of political dependence and colonial exploitation closer to the frame of mind of the common people, irrespective of region and religion. Yes, they were brought closer and immediately relevant to the common man, but relevance had to be brought home to him. He was poor, illiterate and unaware of the world around him, though his native intelligence and love for the mother-land were acknowledgedly unparalleled. One link was missing between the call of the time and response of the people. This most important link had to be provided through making them conscious of their plight as also their might. While political leaders and reformers strived to bring about this awareness through educating the people, the writers instilled in the minds of the people the emotional urge for liberation from foreign rule and charged them with the determination to act. Literature of the 'Twenties and 'Thirties in Indian languages gave expression to the spirit of renaissance which pulsed through the veins of the nation. Malayalam literature of that era is noted for poems which roused the spirit of nationalism with a deeper meaning as well as nationalism which stirred the patriotic sentiments.

The finest expression of this renaissance and nationalism are found in the works of the great poet, Mahakavi Vallathol, who was born 110 years ago and died at the age of 79, and who, by general consensus, was the national poet in Malayalam. Perhaps no other name comes anywhere near Vallathol's in the context of nationalism in Malayalam literature either in the 'Twenties and 'Thirties or any other period, though glimpses of such sentiments are available in the writings of some of his contemporaries. One of the earliest Malayalam novels, *Indulekha*, by Chandu Menon, for

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example, has its hero a young man who championed the ideals of Indian National Congress which came into being just two years before the novel was written. There were poets in whose voluminous works a few stanzas can be discovered which showed their concern for the cause of freedom and integrity of the country. But, in the case of Vallathol, the love of the mother-land, its freedom and all that was glorious in India's tradition and culture, was a commitment and not a passing sentiment. His poems, especially the lyrics, brought him much closer to the people than any of his contemporaries.

As a critic had described, Vallathol was three poets rolled into one—the classicist, the nationalist and the progressivist.

Nationalism, for Vallathol, began at home. Though politically divided into three parts at that time, Kerala was just one integrated entity for him.

The poet who started his career with a translation of a number of *puranas* into Malayalam and ended with the translation of Rig Veda, no wonder, fostered the national concept based on our common cultural heritage. He drew inspiration both from our glorious past and the grass roots of our rural society. That is why Vallathol's poems gave the cultural nourishment so badly needed for a people poised to rediscover and recapture their lost identity and at the same time created the unquenchable thirst for social justice with the spontaneity and supreme sensitivity rarely seen elsewhere. Nationalism in its true sense should comprehend not only the political aspects but also the spiritual and cultural spheres of a country and Vallathol's nationalism should be understood in that larger perspective.

Emphasis on Unity

Most of the earlier poems included in the first four volumes of *Sahitya Manjari*, the eleven volume collection of the lyrics of the poet, echo his reverential tributes to the *Arsha Samskara*. These poems contribute a great deal to the appreciation by the common people of the oneness of this country and the values that had come down to the people, wherever they lived. It is on this strong foundation of pride in our heritage that he built the edifice of the contemporary India with all its human problems including dependence, poverty, casteism and exploitation. Another poet who had turned to promote love and reverence to our heritage during this period was Mahakavi Ulloor. His *Karnabhooshanam Pingala* and *Chitrasala* contained glorious descriptions of great deeds of great people of India.

Vallathol was inspired by the national movement even before the advent of Mahatma Gandhi, his preceptor, on Indian political

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scene. His poems on Dadabhai Naoroji and Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak were the outpourings of a heart which pulsed with the heart of India. The poet blamed himself in a poem titled "Ingratitude" written in 1920, for not being able to contribute to the achieving of freedom of the mother-land.

While describing the dance of Krishna, on the thousand hoods of the mighty Kalia, the poet does not miss the opportunity to warn:

"O you world-conquering evil
However high you lift and spread your hooded head
One tiny little foot of this land of Karma
Is enough to trample it down and humble it."

In one of his longer poems "Disciple and Son," which carries all the characteristic graces of Vallathol's poetry, a scene of confrontation between Lord Shiva's disciple Parasurama and son Ganapathy, has been described. Parasurama, who forces his entry into the chamber of Shiva, defying the gatekeeper Ganapathy, receives a blow from the Lord's son. Parasurama returns the blow and breaks one of the tusks of Ganapathy. In Parasurama, Vallathol portrays a man of steel, Mother India was waiting for, a man who could not brook any delay and would not take any humiliation at anyone's hands. This was because, says Vallathol, "the aneestral blood of Indians was not accustomed to take humiliation even at the hands of God."

On Gandhi

In 1926 appeared two poems which were the curtain-raisers on his immortal piece on Mahatma Gandhi which appeared a year later. In these poems, Vallathol eulogised the greatness of non-violence as a form of struggle and introduced Gandhiji as the hope that had dawned in the east.

In a poem which exhorts people to do away with complacency, the poet says:

For whose *darshan* are our great preceptors doing *tapasya*

There you hear the distant footsteps of that Goddess of liberty

Your ears, that are polluted by listening to the commands of the oppressors

Purify yourselves, hearing that sweet sound of golden jingles
Have you swept off all the rubbish to burn?

Have you laid the carpet woven of equality, non-violence, *Shama* and *Dama*?

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Have you kept ready the oil of love?
To light the lamp in front of the Goddess?
Have you cleaned the flowers of your heart
To offer at the lotus-feet of the Mother?
Unpardonable, it is unpardonable.
The delay, the unpardonable delay.

Then came the well-known poem on Gandhiji. "Ente Gurunathan" ("My Preceptor."):

For him the world is the home
Even the plants and worms are his kith and kin
Sacrifice his achievement, humility his greatness
Spiritual force incarnate, my Preceptor.

Thus begins the poem. The poet describes Gandhiji as a compound of Jesus Christ's capacity for sacrifice, Krishna's zeal for righteousnes, Buddha's devotion to non-violence, Shankaracharya's intellectual grandeur, Harischandra's truthfulness and Mohammad's integrity.

Simultaneously, while articulating the national ideals before the people through the beauty and warmth of great poetry, Vallathol inspired thousands of young men and women through his stirring patriotic songs to plunge into the struggle for freedom. Old freedom-fighters of Kerala recall how they marched in hundreds to participate in Civil Disobedience movement and courted arrest, singing Vallathol's famous song. "Pora, Pora ...." To quote a few lines from that inspiring song:

Not enough, not enough—higher and higher, day by day
Let the holy flag of the divine land of Bharat rise
May this flag of glory flutter at the threshold of every house
From hutments to lovely mansions
Dancing in joy and waving radiant colours galore
May they beckon the liberation we have sought for long
Here with fervour, we dedicate our lives
May you be pleased to raise this heavenward.

Vallathol's poem lent the most effective emotional support not only to the struggle for political freedom but also for the economic and constructive programmes of Gandhiji, Charkha, the spinning wheel, symbolised Vishnu's divine disc meant for slashing the neck of injustice and exploitation. "Turn away poverty by turning the wheel of Charkha", he said.

Vallathol could not think of nationalism devoid of secularism and deep-rooted humanism. He had advanced the cause of the downtrodden, the peasant and the industrial worker. He

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was the first poet to raise voice for liberating the peasants from the exploitation of the landlords as far back as 1917. He wrote about the capitalists who squeezed the life blood out of the workers.

Vallathol denounced untouchability and casteism realising the importance of the emancipation of those sections of society in the awakening and liberation of the country. In this area of national concern the contribution of Mahakavi Kumaran Asan was also very significant. In 1922 appeared two *khanda-kavyas* of Kumaran Asan, *Duravastha* and *Chandala Bhikshuki* which dealt with the theme of untouchability through moving human stories. The warning given by Asan, "Change your rules, or they will change you," continued to inspire reformers and revolutionaries alike.

Religious harmony was another theme of Vallathol's several poems. Vallathol introduced episodes from the life of Jesus Christ and Prophet Mohammed in his poems. For him religious harmony was an integral part of nationalism and he knew how the British rulers were playing up communal disharmony to delay independence.

To sum up, the 'Twenties and 'Thirties were the most prolific period in the history of Malayalam literature as regards nationalism.

The impact was both immediate and long lasting. Immediately these poems brought about encouraging results on the awareness and attitudes of people and inspired them to act in the longer interest of the country and the society.

Do such literature outlive their topicality and survive the period of their immediate relevance is a question often asked. Here is the answer to that question given by Vallathol himself. "Such poems will not die if they have poetry in them and if the content is valid", said Vallathol. No greater testimony is needed to the poetic quality than the fact that several of them live even today on the lips and minds of the people. Regarding the content, the problems handled by Vallathol, Asan and Ulloor continue to exist, though in different form and therefore the poems have not lost their validity altogether. The great poets deserve our gratitude.

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The "Rukminiparinaya" of Bellamkonda Rama Raya Kavi

Dr. K. S. R. DATTA

Bellamkonda Rama Raya (A. D. 1875-1914) was a great Sanskrit writer who made a significant contribution to Sanskrit and Advaita Vedanta. He was born in Pamidipadu in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh. In a short span of 38 years of his life he produced 143 works including *kavyas*, *stotras* and works on ethics, grammar, and Advaita Vedanta. His major works are the *Bhagavadgitabhashyarthaprakasika*, *Sankarasankarabhashyavimarsah* etc., where he meets the criticism of Ramanuja and Vedanta Desika against Sankara and gives a word-to-word reply to their arguments. All his writings have the characteristic clarity and lucidity.

Though mainly a philosopher, Rama Raya was able to write, like Vedanta Desika, sweet poetry too apart from dry and abstract subjects like Vedanta or Dharma-sastra. Poetry wooed him in his early age. So the art of writing poetry was acquired by him not by his effort but by the grace of Lord Hayagriva. He was a born-poet. Being highly proficient both in *kavyas* and *sastras* he could be called, in the words of Rajasekhara, an *ubhayakavi*. His mastery over *sastras* like the grammar, logic and Vedanta amply justifies his writing of poetry, since a knowledge of these *sastras* is considered a necessary pre-requisite for writing *kavyas*.

Rama Raya was inspired by the sweet and devotional poetry of ancient writers, especially of Kalidasa, Sankara and Vedanta Desika. His intense devotion to God and his love for poetry made him produce a few independent poetical works. He combined devotion and poetry in his works and thus made his life fruitful.

The following *kavyas* of Rama Raya are available to us. 1) *Srikrishnalilatarangini*, 2) *Samudramathana-campuh*, 3) *Rukminiparinaya-campuh*, 4) *Kandarpadarpavilasa-bhanah*.

Now let us study briefly the *Rukminiparinaya-campuh*. As the name suggests, the work deals with the story of Krishna wedding

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Rukmini. The *adhyayas* 52, 53 and 54 of the tenth *skandha* of the *Bhagavata-purana,* depicting the story of Lord Krishna marrying Rukmini, form the basis of the present work. While the story in the original is only in 161 verses and is small and simple, it has been elaborated by Rama Raya. This work is in nine *vilasas* or chapters and is comparatively smaller than Rama Raya's other *kavyas.* It contains 618 verses and 53 prose pieces. *Vilasa* II, the biggest of all, has 111 verses and six prose pieces. The prose pieces are small and the entire work has not more than ten big *gadyas*; but for the small number of *gadyas,* this work is more a *padyakavya* than a *campuh.*

There is a very brief commentary by Rama Raya himself on this and he has not named it. He observes in the beginning of the commentary on the first verse that he writes his own commentary lest he should be misconstrued. However, it does not satisfy the *pancalakshanas* of a standard commentary.

The *Rukminiparinaya-campuh* is a typical *mahakavya* fulfilling all the requisites. It commences with a salutation to Madhava Who is the Supreme Soul, Who is otherwise called *satyam, jnanam* and *anantam.* The author observes that even a matter of fact statement (*svabhavokti*) made with regard to gods like Brahma and others, will be hyperbolic; on the other hand, any hyperbolic statement, made by Brahma, etc., will be a natural statement with regard to Madhava. Krishna (Madhava) is the hero and Rukmini is the heroine of the work and *sringara* is the chief sentiment. Rama Raya states that his work, which may contain some blemishes, will yet be delightful and sweet like the indistinct words of a parrot.

The story as contained in this work is mostly faithful to the core of the original, i. e., the *Bhagavata-purana* with a few deviations or innovations. Rukmini, the daughter of Bhishma, the king of Kundina, aspires to marry Krishna Whose virtues, narrated and praised by her father's bards, have attracted her to Him. But her brother, Rukmi, insists on her being wed to Sisupala whom she dislikes. She sends her message of love, through a Brahmin, to Krishna. That Brahmin returns and informs her of Krishna's readiness to marry her. On the day of wedding, Krishna arrives at Kundina along with Balarama and takes away Rukmini on his chariot while all the princes look on helplessly. When Rukmi chases and hurls abuses at him, Krishna shows his Narasimharupa and tries to kill him. But, he desists from killing as Rukmini intervenes. Krishna reaches Dvaraka along with Balarama and Rukmini. In the meanwhile, Bhishma too arrives at Dvaraka and he himself celebrates the marriage of his daughter

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with Krishna. Thus, Rukmini weds Krishna and leads a happy life with him. A close study of this work reveals that Rama Raya has imitated and profusely drawn from the *Krishnalilatarangini* (Taranga XII) of Narayanatirtha in the field of story, descriptions, etc.

The poet has made the following innovations in the story: (1) the Brahmin messenger returns to Kundina and reports to Rukmini about Krishna's agreeing to marry her as desired by her while in the original story it is stated that Krishna, along with His retinue and the Brahmin, came straight to Kundina. Later, on Krishna's arrival, the Brahmin informed Rukmini of Krishna's plan to take her away to Dvaraka. (2) Krishna shows his Nrisimhavatara to Rukmini and attempts to kill him. This is not found in the original story. (3) Rukmini intervenes and begs of Krishna in philosophical terms to desist from killing her brother. (4) Rukmini's father comes to Dvaraka to celebrate his daughter's marriage with Krishna. The original story says that Krishna married her at Dvaraka and it seems no relative of her attended the marriage.

The author seems to have been influenced much by the story contained in Bammera Potana's *Andhramahabhagavata* in the context of the wedding of Rukmini, in places like Rukmini sending a message to Krishna through a Brahmin and her worry over his delay in returning from Dvaraka. The only deviation herein is that Krishna is described as having shown his ferocious Narasimha-rupa to kill Rukmi.

In matters like describing Rukmini's intense love for Krishna (*Vilasa* I), the beauty of Rukmini (*Vilasa* II), the marriage of Krishna and Rukmini (*Vilasa* VIII), the applause of the ladies of the town for the fine match of Rukmini and Krishna (*Vilasa* III) and the love sports of Krishna and Rukmini (*Vilasa* IX), Rama Raya closely imitates Kalidasa's description of Parvati's beauty, her marriage with Lord Siva, the ladies of Oshadhiprastha eulogising the match of Siva and Parvati and their love sports.

During the wedding, Bhishma, while offering his daughter to Krishna says. " This, my daughter. who is very dear to me like my heart, is being offered to you. May she be accepted by you as your better half, *ardhangi.*" This is reminiscent of the King Janaka's saying, while giving away Sita to Rama in marriage. The priest remarks that Krishna's wish was to make Rukmini his *purnangi* and not merely his *ardhangi* and this is a unique way of indicating Krishna's abundant love for Rukmini.

Though Rama Raya is a devotee of Hayagriva (Vishnu), he is equally devotional to other gods. He bursts into raptures

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of praise when he makes Rukmini eulogise the goddess Gauri in the temple a little before her proposed marriage with Sisupala. These *slokas*, full of devotion, evidently show that he was influenced by the *Devidasasloki* attributed to Kalidasa.

The poet seizes every opportunity to portray Krishna as the Supreme God, Who creates, maintains and destroys this Universe and Who grants *moksha* to all the individual souls. These philosophical ideas are very ingeniously put into the mouth of Rukmini who eulogises and entreats the enraged Krishna to pardon and save the life of her brother.

To demonstrate his knowledge of the *mantras*, *slokas* etc., recited during the wedding ceremony, the poet has composed eight verses called *mangalashtakas* recited during the marriage of Krishna with Rukmini, wishing well to the couple and this is rarely done by other writers. The Vedic ideas like *Yo vaitaam brahmano veda* ...(*Taittiriyaranyaka*, 1,27,3) and *Sahasrasirsha purushah sahasrakshah* .....*Rigveda* X, 90. 1) are incorporated in certain verses as eulogies of Lord Krishna by Brahma, Rudra and Indra.

Rama Raya's proficiency in the *Kamasutras* is also well revealed when he describes the love-sports of Krishna and Rukmini in detail in *Vilasa* IX. It may be mentioned here without any reservation that he goes a step further than Kalidasa in describing the love-sports. Perhaps he was guided by the *Bhagavatacampu* which too is highly erotic in canto VI.

In accomplishing some astonishing feat of verbal jugglery Rama Raya shows great skill in the ingenious construction of verses known as the *citrabandas* and follows the examples found in the *Kiratarjuniya* (canto XV), the *Sisupalavadha* (canto XIX) and the *Yadavabhyudaya* (canto VI). He has exhibited his mastery of metrics by using a variety of metres. Being an Andhra, he introduces, now and then, rules of Telugu prosody like *praasamaitri* and *yatiniyama* in canto VII.

An interesting feature of Rama Raya's work lies in the way of skillfully introducing the manners and customs of Telugu people observed during marriages He has composed and introduced five *nirajanaslokas* called *Mangalahaarati-paatalu* in Telugu, which are recited by the elderly *suvasini* ladies, who hold and wave, by way of blessing the couple, a metallic plate containing water mixed with turmeric and lime powder. This is an auspicious custom observed even now in Andhra and other parts of South India. The *suvasini* ladies, wishing well of Krishna is imitative of Kausalya's conferring blessings on Rama at the time of his going to the forest.

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He seems to compete as it were with Bana in writing prose with long and high-sounding compounds whose meaning can be known after the second or third reading only with the help of a lexicon. His descriptions are often graphic and effective and for this purpose he resorts to *gadya*. He uses a variety of *sabdalanakaras* and *arthalankaras*. Though he composed this work after the *Samudramathana-campu* and the *Ramaparinaya-campu*, which are simple and easy in style, he must have written this in order to display his learning and skill in writing in an ornate style also. He claims, in his commentary on the first verse of the first canto, that this work is an *uttama-kavya* since it abounds in *dhvani* or suggestion.

THE WOMAN

K. VENUGOPALA RAO

They tiptoed to my work-spot
Ogled her hungrily
A co-worker with me.
They whispered amidst chuckles
A cute damsel? lucky.
Wonder-struck, puzzled
I peered at her—
Just a bag of flesh and blood
She was just like myself;
But a sacred thread
Dangling from the neck,
Silver rings on her toes
Projected on my mind's screen
A picture of a Hindu woman
A mother, sister, wife, daughter
Manifested and paraded;
Before my unblurred vision
The Ganges of love and sacrifice
Rushing out
And encircling me;
Filled with tears of joy
My eyes twinkled.

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NOBLE THOUGHTS FOR A HAPPY LIFE

BHAVARAJU NARASIMHA RAO

[Many readers who perused the note "Bhavaraju Narasimha Raoji Honoured" in the last number (Jan-March 1987) of "Triveni", expressed their desire to read the article by Mr. Narasimha Rao which was published in the *Bhavan's Journal* (April 1-15, 1986). In deference to their wish this article is reproduced with the kind courtesy of the journal.

Associate Editor]

Aano bhadrah kratavo yantu visvatah — Rigveda

"Let noble thoughts come to us from every side," says the Rigveda.

Man is a social animal. In his merely animal state his sole concern is the satisfaction of his animal needs – hunger, sleep, freedom from fear and procreation. While at one end of his being he may be an animal, at the other end, he is an enquirer, searching for answers. He sets goals for himself and strives to reach them. This is the beginning of his quest for a happy life — a life higher than mere material happiness, a life which teaches him the unity and oneness of life ; a life in which he realises that in the memorable words of Lord Jesus — "In losing life he gains it."

Now, happiness can be temporal or temporary and spiritual or permanent. Man being what he is he derives happiness, or rather feels happy, in different ways. My master and mentor, the late Shri Ramakotiswara Rau — who made it his life-mission "to draw together the cultured men and women of all lands to establish a fellowship of the spirit, and to promote movements that make for idealism in India and elsewhere" — used to feel supreme happiness when he saw *Triveni*, his dream-child, coming out of the press in colourful robes. My esteemed friend, the late Shri Iswara Dutt, used to feel extremely happy when he enjoyed a cheroot after breakfast and a steaming cup of coffee, before writing his editorial for the "Twentieth Century." My

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good friend, Shri Sastry, feels very happy when he listens to the divine music of that Queen of Karnatak Music, Smt. Subbulakshmi. My neighbour, Shri Rao, feels happy when he enjoys a picture, almost every alternate day, in the company of his beloved wife. Why, it amuses me beyond description when I am beaten hollow in a game of tennis by my son, without opening my account. Therefore, this feeling of happiness is different from person to person according to their Samskaras or proclivities. All this may be classed as temporal or temporary happiness.

We must remember that true happiness has Dharma at its basis and sorrow proceeds from lack of Dharma. Everyone of us is afraid of sorrow and is desirous of happiness. "*Kshipram hi maanushe loke siddhirbhavati karmajaa*". "People seeking the fruit of actions worship the gods in this world, for in this world of men, the point of action comes quickly", says the *Gita*. Hence, Dharma can be based on happiness in this world. Happiness which is durable for the present and future lives is the only permanent happiness.

For attaining that state and for enjoying a happy life our Dharmasastras kept lofty ideals before us. Some of them are — service, beneficence, devotion and renunciation.

"*Ayam nijah parovetti gananaa laghuchetasaam*
Udaaracharitaanaam tu vasudhaiva kutumbakam"

"This is my man, that is a stranger or an outsider. So discriminate the narrow-minded. For the generous ones, the whole world is kin."

That should be our ideal for serving humanity, and one should endeavour his best to live up to that ideal, as far as it lies in his power.

Our epics and Puranas are replete with illustrious characters who are beaconlights for all time. Sri Rama, the embodiment of the highest concept of Aryan nobility, out of respect for his father's alleged wish, banished himself to the forest for fourteen years. Bharata the ideal brother, renounced the kingdom which was secured for him by his mother Kaikeyee who fell a victim to vicious advice.

Bhishma, the Mahabharata version of Sri Ramachandra, renounced his kingdom and his personal happiness and led a life of a Karmayogi to please his father. Prince Siddartha renounced his kingdom, his beloved wife and dear son and found eternal bliss while meditating under the shade of the Bodhi tree and was revered by his devotees all over the world as Gautama,

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the Buddha. His noble life and golden words inspire men and women of all ages and climes. Says he—

"Rise from dreams and loiter not,
Open to truth the mind
Practise righteousness and thou eternal bliss will find."

"The bliss of a happy life is attainable by everyone who walks in the noble eight-fold path. He that cleaves to wealth had better cast it away than allow his heart to be poisoned by it, but he who does not cleave to wealth, and possessing riches, uses them rightly, will be a blessing unto his fellow-beings"

Lord Christ, "the prince of glory," sacrificed his precious life for preaching the Gospel. His sermon on the mount is a classic, and a sacred Mantra to mankind. Here are a few amongst the gems—"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you....When thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth....Thine alms may be in the secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly."

Muhammed, the Great, who had to fight his way for existence says—"Whosoever is kind to God's creatures, God is kind to him. Therefore be kind to man on earth, whether good or bad; and being kind to bad, is to withhold him from badness so that those who are in heaven may be kind to you."

Guru Nanak, the great preceptor of the Sikhs, tells us the truth when he says—"God is not pleased by obstinate penance only, nor by religious garbs He who fashioned the vessel of the body and poured into it His ambrosial gifts, will only be satisfied with man's love and service."

The gentle words of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa are ambrosia to real Sadhakas for a happy life. He says: "Don't find fault with anyone, nor even with an insect. As you pray to God for devotion, so also, pray that you may not find fault with anyone."

Now, coming to our times, we have before us Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhiji discovered happiness in serving mankind, in working for the freedom of our country and bringing relief and succour to the oppressed sections of our society. When he found himself drawn into politics, he asked himself what was necessary for him in order to remain absolutely untouched by immorality, by untruth, by what is known as political gain. He came to the conclusion that if he had to serve the people, he must discard all wealth, all possessions, and he discarded everything. He derived

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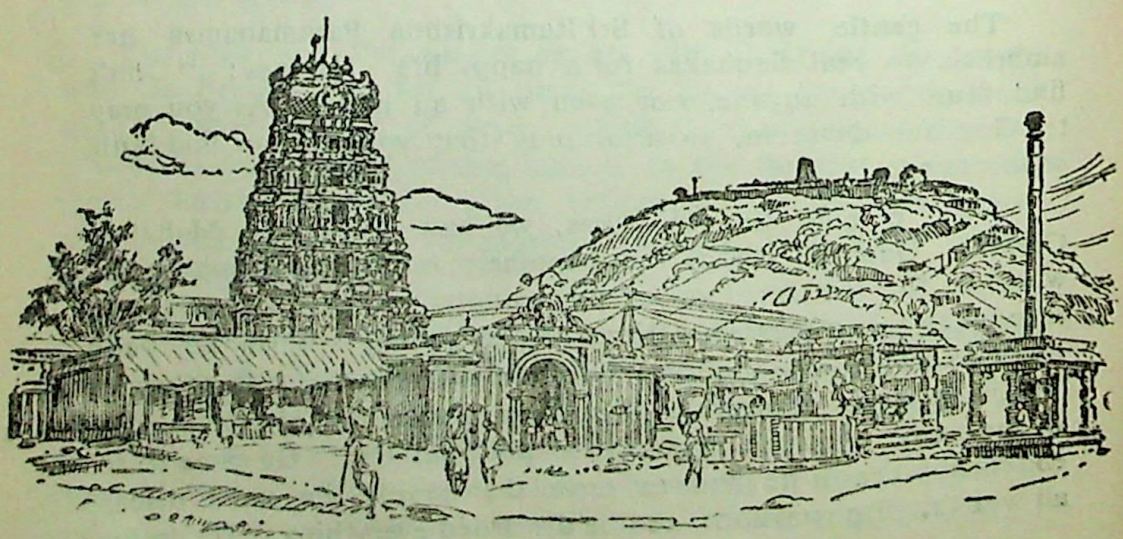
great comfort and greater joy in sacrifice. He therefore declared: "The secret of a happy life lies in renunciation. Renunciation is life. Indulgence spells death. Let us not mistake that if one has wealth it should be thrown away, and wife and children should be turned out of doors. We should ponder well as to what our duty is today. And so, the best and most effective Mantra is—"*Tena tyaktena bhunjeethaah*", that is, "enjoy your wealth by renouncing it." Expanded it means: "Earn your crores by all means But understand that your wealth is not yours; it belongs to the people. Take what you require for your legitimate needs, and use the remainder for the society."

He evolved the doctrine of "Trusteeship." He wanted the capitalists to hold their wealth in trust for the people and use it for social good and not for personal enjoyment alone. He wanted a social order which would secure the greatest good of all, that is, Sarvodaya.

The noble thoughts of great men are meant for all ages. They bear the stamp of eternity and whenever invoked—be it in any language and any country — they make the listener nobler and draw him towards divinity. Let us therefore welcome nobler thoughts from every side and pray:

"*Asato ma sadgamaya*
Tamaso ma jyotirgamaya
Mrityor ma amritam gamaya."

"From untruth lead us to truth;
from darkness lead us into light;
from death lead us to immortality."



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REVIEWS

The Beautiful and the Handsome: By Uroob. Kerala Sahitya Akademi, Trichur. Price Rs. 35.

This novel by Kuttikrishnan, written under the pen-namne Uroob, is in the original Malayalam and translated by Dr Susila Misra and sponsored by The Kerala Sahitya Akademi. The author is well known for his social novels and has had a very good reception from the reading public. A lot of information about the author and his other writings find a place in the long introduction by Prof. Tharakkan.

The story runs into a number of pages and contains as the background a fairly long period extending from the pre-first world war up to the post-second world war portraying also the conditions of society in Kerala from feudal stage to the communistic trend prevailing in politics. The Khilafat movement, the Moplah rebellion and the later national "Quit India" agitation—all have their reflections on the story which is a bit complex. The introduction gives a brief summary of the events and relieves the reader of any confusion of characters and events getting mixed up in our memory.

From the English translation, which runs smooth and preserves the atmosphere of the original successfully, sustains the reader's interest throughout till the end. The dialogues are not artificial because of the rendering done with care to retain its simplicity. The incidents connected with the Non-co-operation upsurge as also of the rise of communism bring into focus two or three characters who play a very typical role of self-sacrifice and national uplift. A woman, named Radha, who traverses the entire story with an attitude of utter self-effacement and patience, takes the reader to view the other important character, Visvam, as no more effective in the capacity to earn our sympathies for his patience and unobtrusiveness. The conclusion too looks as natural, and nowhere we come across any occurrence as melodramatic.

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Maybe, the unsparing critic would choose to mention that the narration of some of the political incidents appears dragging; still they do not mar the effect of natural consequences for the shaping of the characters to satisfaction.

— K. CHANDRASEKHARAN

Srimad Bhagavad Gita with Gitarthasangraha of Abhinavagupta: Ed. Dr. S. Sankaranarayanan. Vol. I (Text), Vol. 2 (Translation into English). Oriental Research Institute, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati. Price Rs. 60 each.

Abhinavagupta is well known as an exponent of Kashmir Saivism and an authority on Aesthetics. Little is known of his work on the Bhagavad Gita. Here is the full text of the Gita, his commentary and translation into English by Dr. Sankaranarayanan, along with notes, annotations, indices. As one would expect, the commentator has his own slant in interpreting the key verses of the text. He differs from the Mayavada of Shankara in as much as he regards the universe as a purposeful projection of the Pure Consciousness that is divine. Also ... "While knowledge is what is important, actions should not be abandoned.... Both together constitute consciousness, *Jnanakriyamayatvat Samvittattvasya.*" His definitions of *yajna, vidhi* are outside the common beat. His approach is more universal and catholic than that of most orthodox scholars: he does consider women and Shudras eligible for the scriptural knowledge. His emphasis on Sila and purificatory discipline in addition to Sastra is noteworthy.

Though not all the verses have been commented upon, what he has said is enough to open new vistas towards a larger understanding of the Gita. To Abhinavagupta, the Gita is *adisiddhasutra*, "aphorism of the Foremost among the Beatified." The editorial labour that has gone into the production of this work is commendable.

— M. P. PANDIT

The Eight Anthologies: By J. R. Marr. Institute of Asian Studies, Tiruvanmiyur, Madras-41. Price: Rs. 100.

The "Eight Anthologies" or *Ettuttakai* studied in this book can be considered as among the most important of the Tamil Sangam poems, of probably the first three centuries of the Christian era. Two of them, the *Purananuru* and the *Pattirruppattu*, are discussed more especially.

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Dr. Marr is a British scholar of Tamil who has been bringing to Tamil studies a wider vision than most of the Indian savants seem to command. Foreigners have entered what are called "Indic studies" to quite a considerable extent. Some, or rather a few, of them seem inclined to want to dazzle and amaze the natives with paradoxes and provocations. This has become particularly true of south Indian historical studies. We are now being told that the Cholas were rascally imperialists who sustained their empire by raiding and plundering other countries. We are also told that the Sri Vijaya Empire which, many Chola inscriptions and literary works say, the Cholas conquered was "probably" only a figment of imagination. Such are the excesses.

But Dr. Marr is the exact opposite of iconoclasts like those who promulgate such subversive views. He is nothing if not objective, he forswears speculation and surmise. He does not move an inch away from what the texts say. But this is not all.

Dr. Marr brings to his task a view of the problems that is freer, less confined and restricted, farther ranging than most of earlier scholars in this field. He has no prepossessions, no prejudices, no preconceptions He brings a fresh, but informed, mind to his problems. The result is a book of a kind far from usual in studies of Sangam literature.

The author attempts to assess the anthologies as material for history and as literature. The latter study includes a long examination of the prosody. But it is the historical examination that is of general interest.

An important question is the identification of Karuvur and Vanchi, occurring in Sangam literature. This problem has been discussed to a considerable length. Dr Marr suggests that Karuvur is Karur, now in Tiruchi district of Tamilnad. This is now the generally accepted view. But, Dr. Marr says, Vanchi is not Karuvur, though the mediaeval commentators said it was It is rather to be identified with a place near Kodungallur, on the Cochin coast (which the Europeans called "Crangnore").

Dr. Marr makes a valuable point as to the so-called "Aryan," or north Indian, influence on ancient Tamil society. There are "numerous references in the anthologies to Puranic gods and stories and to Brahmanical customs. Moreover, poets such as Kapilar speak of themselves as Brahmans." The cultural synthesis "was already far advanced in the Tamil area of South India." Further, the eight anthologies bear scanty evidence to the activities of the Jains and the Buddhists as to "Aryanisation." This was rather the work of the Hindus. While the anthologies

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are mostly "secular" in tone, they are very familiar with Hindu beliefs and customs.

As a work of scholarship that opens out new vistas, this book is likely to become a landmark in Sangam studies.

— N. S. RAMASWAMI

The Grace of Sai: By R. Lowenberg. India Book House, Nariman Point, Bombay-29. Price: Rs. 22-50.

A book of this kind can be produced only by one whose heart is imbued with and soaked in faith. Lowenberg is really lucky to have been so fully convinced about Sri Satya Sai Baba being a divine incarnation. His faith and conviction are fully reflected in this statement: "He does not die, nor is he born. He is the supreme universal power, who has been in existence even before the universe was formed by Him. He merely decided out of compassion, to take human form in answer to the prayers of the great souls, who foresaw that mankind was about to destroy itself." With a view to enabling the reader to see Sai Baba in this perspective, the author has narrated the various incidents and experiences of a number of people, very often in their own words. Everything has been set forth with utmost authenticity.

Legion, in fact, are the stories in which Baba saves people from death, disastrous accidents, serious illnesses, or turns people suddenly away from extreme perversion and depravity. Lowenberg, however, has confined himself only to those whose veracity he could himself verify by getting to know things at first-hand from the people concerned. Sample the following:

Mr. Tom Bolton of Phoenix, Arizona, narrates: "It was nearing Baba's 55th birthday — a day we were sure we would never forget. However, on the morning of 23rd November, we had in fact forgotten. I decided to clean out a small incense-holder, which is egg-shaped and I knew that the little stick at the end had fallen in I turned it upside down and started to bang the bottom end. Out came a stick — and another and another until twenty-three sticks had fallen out of this tiny little holder which could not possibly have held that number of sticks. I suddenly realized — 23 — hey, that's today — Swami's birthday. I yelled out to Winifred, "Guess what today is? Its Baba's birthday and we did forget — but he reminded us."

The book makes out a good case for the occult and the miraculous and shows how belief in the divine transforms even one's mundane life.

— P. P. SHARMA

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A Medley of Middles: By K. V. Chako. Writers Workshop, Calcutta-45. Price: Rs. 20.

Delightful these skits are after the fashion of "Alpha of the Plough" (A. G. Gardiner's). Trifles they may be as experiences in life, but the intense observation of events and situations in society and contacts with people, make them rememberable There are twenty-eight of them, each short and spicy on account of the sarcasm inlaid as well as the piquancy of language. When finishing reading them a sense of fulfilment of an hour of most pleasant feelings lingers in the mind The purpose of such writing itself is to keep the reader's mind in no fatigue. On the other hand one may feel "as airily sure of finding a smiling 'thank you'" as one reflects upon each of them.

—K. CHANDRASEKHARAN

Vallabhacharya on the Love-games of Krishna: By James D. Redington. Motilal Banarsi Das, Delhi-7 Price: Rs. 140.

Srimad Bhagavatam in Samskrit is a Purana *par excellence.* Tenth-book thereof is its crest jewel. Chapters 29-33 therein again describing the dalliances of the divine Krishna with the young damsels of Vraja (Raasaleelas) form the most lustrous gems studded therein: Propriety of Raasaleelas is still a controversial subject to non-traditionalists. Many commentaries on these chapters explained the allegorical and philosophical significance of these sports. Vallabhacharya's commentary Subodhini has its unique distinction from other commentaries. His aesthetic and psychological approach, his postulation of two important concepts "Total love" and "constraint" (*Sarvaatma bhaava* and *Nirodha* in the original), and some other ideas, give a distinct place to his commentary, which, though appears to be smooth and unambiguous, is not that easy to understand. It is in this context that both the translator and publishers deserve our compliments. The former for his lucid and free translation of the original texts of Bhagavata chapters 29 to 33 and 35, also, and the commentary Subodhini, which also he has edited and included in this volume as "appendix", and the latter for its publication.

Translator's footnotes facilitate an easy understanding of some difficult words and phrases. A long introduction of 47 pages in English by the translator, gives a clear idea of the concepts of total love, and constraint etc., that we come across in the commentary.

This valuable work containing both the original text, and commentary in the Devanagari script with a free translation is really

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a boon both to students of Samskrit and others as well. Omission of translation of words like "eva" (एव) and others in some places, however, fail to convey the emphasis, etc., intended in the original. Of two sentences "*Ritumapi sharadameva kritvaa*" and "*Tasyaapi rauryam pushpameva kritvaa*" are translated as "making the seasons autumn since the antumn causes flowers to bloom." But such small things as these do not detract the work from its merits and we commend this to all lovers of Srimad Bhagavatam.

— B. KUTUMBA RAO

SAMSKRIT

Minor Works of *Nilakantha Dikshita* : Edited by Dr. Pullela Sriramachandra. Published by Samskrit Parishat, Osmania University, Hyderabad-7. Price : Rs. 15.

Nilakantha Dikshita, a scion of the famous Appayya Dikshita's family, was an administrator, and a great Samskrit poet. His works are noted for Vakrokti in addition to *Upama*, *Arthagambhirya*, and *Padalalitya*. The minor works under review are long out of print, and we thank the Osmania University authorities for publishing this work.

(1) *Kalividambana Sataka* and (2) *Anyapadesa Sataka* are satiric in their nature and expose the evils prevalent in the poet's days. (3) *Sabharanjana Sataka* is a repository of wisdom. (4) *Santi Vilasa* and (5) *Vairagya Sataka* praise the efficacy and glory or mental tranquillity and detachment. (6) *Ananda Sagarastava* is a beautiful devotional lyric, full of noble and philosophic ideas, in praise of the universal Mother. (7) *Sivotkarshamanjari* extols Siva as superior to all other deities.

An introduction in English gives a brief life sketch of the author and points out the nature of each work with illustrations. A good book for all libraries.

— B. K SASTRI

TAMIL

Tamilakathil Therukuttu : By Dr. A. Arivunambi. Amudan Noolakam, Karaikudi. Price: Rs. 40.

India's cultural heritage has been preserved very well because it was never merely elitist. All the rungs of the social order had forged their own means of disseminating the tradition widely and deeply. The vast rural population which found leisure in the summer months encouraged the growth of the street drama — *therukuttu* — to spend the long, hot nights in a purposeful manner.

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The actors wore decorated, wooden masks and enacted epic and Puranic tales with the aid of vigorous gestures and sustained musical recitation. It is said that Subramania Bharati was inspired to write his celebrated epic, *Panchali Sapatham*, after witnessing a *therukuttu* on the theme.

The origins of this art form go back to the Sangam Age for the *Silappadhikaram* speaks of *Aha-kuttu* (elitist) and *Pura-kuttu* (commoner's) varieties. Both were held in high respect as they were attuned to divine worship.

Dr A. Arivunambi's doctoral study speaks about the closeness of *therukuttu* and the village temple, mostly dedicated to the Mother Goddess, especially as Draupadi. The dramas are usually staged during festivals. Occasionally they are used to give an auspicious conclusion to funeral rites, or presented in honour of settling a major village dispute. Dr. Arivunambi's statistical data is meagre (almost all his material is drawn from the Purasai Raghava Thambiran troupe) and a good deal of the writing is repetitive. All the same the book offers an authentic glimpse into the world of the *therukuttu* artistes who hold on to age-old traditions despite financial discouragement and the serious threat from films. Thanks to the sincerity and natural force of the Tamil verses, even the illiterate Indian knows well the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, the heroes and heroines, the struggle between Light and Darkness and the ultimate triumph of righteousness. As the drama progresses far into the night, there is warm communion between the actors and the viewers on the subjects of religious faith and moral rectitude. The viewers imbibe all about moral evil and of moral good and the need for walking the path of *dharma*. It is good to know that the Government is at last lending a helping hand to this art form to save it from oblivion.

— Dr. PREMA NANDAKUMAR

TELUGU

Bolo Swatantra Bharat Ki Jai: A Document on Social Life: By K. Chiranjeevi Visalandhra Publishing House, Vijayawada-4. Price: Rs. 30.

A prolific writer of repute K. Chiranjeevi lables his book as a social document, but it is something more. Purporting to portray the life in our State spread over a period of three decades and odd, beginning roughly with the advent of freedom, it opens a total perspective of unemployment, reservations, inter-caste feuds and weddings, love, struggle for land, woes of the have-nots, the political ups and downs and what have you. An undercurrent of Indian ethos permeates this work which has a

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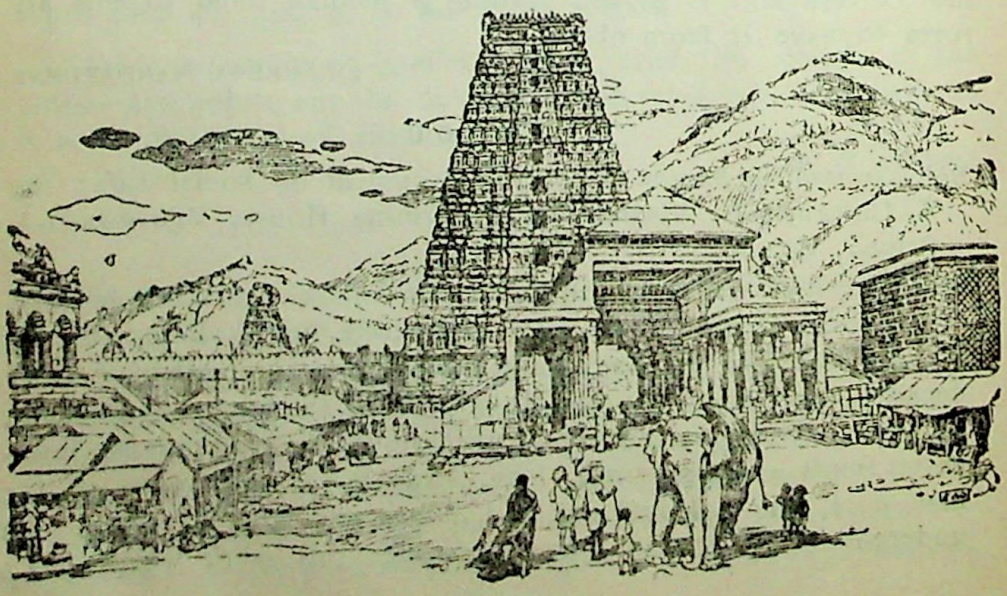
fish-eye's perspective and a bird's-eye canvas. Some unforgettable characters taken from a typical Telugu village, their aspirations and disappointments and their rise and fall form the real basis of the story, if one may call it so. Documents of occurrences around culled from the media juxtaposed with the pageant of rural vignettes of humanity enrich the value of the book. This skillful blend is in fact the *raison de'tre of bolo swatantra Bharat ki jai.* One wonders if the author could be sure of an undivided attention of the reader. This apart, the author does a fine job. His approach is sincere, human and warm. The style is racy and modern and makes for easy reading.

— DR. DHARA RAMANADHA SASTRY

Jeevitam (Kavyam): By Mona. Kamalambika Press, Nellore. Price: Rs. 10.

Mona's second volume of poetry entitled *Jeevitam* (Life) bears unmistakable stamp of poetry on it. As the poet himself states, this is an attempt to encase fleeting life in permanent rock-letters of poetry. The poet like an expert photographer presents life from different angles with the help of beautiful images. The entire poem is a cascade of beauty. Both in thought and style, the poet is tremendously indebted to Sri Sri of *Mahaprasthanam,* which detracts greatly from the merit of the poem. Sometimes, however, he is less meticulous than Sri Sri in his choice of words and rhythm. In spite of false touches here and there the poem is highly enjoyable. The poet is definitely on the road to great success.

— DR. G. SRIRAMA MURTHY



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TRIVENI

A LITERARY AND CULTURAL QUARTERLY
Founded in 1928

Vol. 56 No 2 July - September 1987

Founded by
K. RAMAKOTISWARA RAU

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Dr. BHAVARAJU NARASIMHA RAO

Associate Editor
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TRIVENI PUBLISHERS Pvt. Ltd.
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INFORMATION ABOUT 'TRIVENI'

'TRIVENI' is published during April, July, October and January– a new Volume commencing in April, every year. Subscriptions may begin with any Number but no enlistment will be made for periods of less than a year.

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EDITED, PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY DR. BHAVARAJU NARASIMHA RAO
AT THE TRIVENI PRESS, MACHILIPATNAM - 521 001

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OUR CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ITS MODERN ORIENTATION—I

SRI SWAMI RANGANATHANANDA

Our Cultural Heritage

[Sri Swami Ranganathananda, Head of the Ramakrishna Math, Hyderabad, delivered the Sardar Patel Memorial Lecture on November 3 and 4, 1986, at Bombay. With the kind permission of the All India Radio, Delhi, which broadcast it, we reproduce the first part in this number and the second part appears in the next one. — *Editor*]

On this continent of India a big cultural experiment was started by the ancient Vedic people. We do not know exactly about the Indus Valley people. They became unified into a single people. That is the beginning of India. A wonderful assimilation of two types of cultures—one urban, the other rural. The Aryan was rural and the Indus Valley was urban. Perhaps there may have been a little conflict in the beginning as always happens; but the greatest thing that took place was a tremendous synthesis of diverse elements and that has continued to be the great hallmark of Indian culture up to our time. If they can blend together into a great people, then another two another three, another four can also join together That is what has happened to our culture up to our time. Behind this great blending and synthesis was a spiritual vision, a philosophical outlook which has come to be known in later periods as unity in diversity We do not want to destroy diversity. Diversity makes more for enrichment of a culture but we shall subject our diversity to a central thread of spiritual unity. That was the vision of the ancient sages. That vision has continued to inspire India throughout the ages including this modern period. Originally it was of a spiritual vision, the one behind the many, one thread of spiritual unity, running through all of us. Some of the most beautiful verses of the Upanishads deal with this great subject. The senses

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reveal to us diversity and variety. This becomes a challenge to the human mind. Is it really true? Is there unity behind this diversity? Now this is a great scientific quest. In modern physical science we ask the same question. Is this diversity, the main truth about this nature? Is there a unity behind this diversity?

In the science subjects physics, chemistry, botany, zoology, in every one of them — we ask this question. The senses reveal diversity. Is it true? Then we penetrate into the heart of nature and discover unity behind this diversity. This is so prominently expressed in modern biology. When a man like Darwin will say there is such an amount of kinship between one species and the other and man as well as animal and plant, there is wonderful kinship between all this. And biology tries to find linkages between one phenomenon and another phenomenon and they discovered these linkages. This search for the one behind the many was a tremendous search that our ancient thinkers undertook in India. Behind our culture is a profound thinking, profound philosophy. First, science of the external world and second, science of the internal world of man. We did discover great truths in the physical sciences. In fact, according to certain Arab Muslim scholar of Spain—Moorish Spain of eleventh century AD—among the nations enumerated by that author the nations which have cultivated physical sciences he places India as the foremost. India is the greatest nation that has contributed so much to the physical sciences, he says.

Now that was our first contribution. But the search for unity did not end up there. It entered into the human spirit. Men are different—black colour, white colour, brown colour—various other differences are there. What is the truth about man? It is in this field India achieved tremendous breakthrough which has come down to us as the greatest wisdom of India — the greatest contribution to world thought itself. They discovered a profound unity behind diversity of human types.

In the world of religion, they discovered unity. In the world of nature, they discovered unity. In the world of man also, they discovered unity. In the world of religion, there was a tremendous discovery. And you get it in the *Rigveda* itself: *Ekam sat, vipra bahudha vadanti* — one of the outstanding utterances of our culture — "Truth is one. Sages call it by various names." This was the great utterance which became strengthened and reinforced by subsequent teachers and thinkers until it has become one of the important cultural inheritances of the people of India. The spirit of harmony, the spirit of concord, the spirit of tolerance, as acceptance which is so characteristic of India, we owe to this first great discovery in the *Rigveda*, i. e., unity in religion. Second

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was unity in the whole of nature. Everything in this world comes from one original source. That is the great idea you find in the Upanishads. We have the first opening verse of the *Rigveda* dealing with the principle of fire: "*Agnimele purohitam*" — "Fire is a supreme reality in this world." The whole universe is a manifestation of fire. It is not this fire that you find on the hearth. But the very principle of fire that was a tremendous generalisation—the fire in your hearth, fire in the sun and fire in your stomach digesting your food —they all belong to the same category. There is unity behind all these. These are all tremendous achievements of the human mind very early in history. Then finally turning to man, we see all differences outside. Let us penetrate into him.

It was in this field India contributed something unique which has never been repeated anywhere else. This discovery of the one behind many, one infinite in all the beings here—like a thread that runs through all the gems in a garland. Gems are different in colour or shape, but the thread unites all of them. This discovery of the one single spiritual thread of being behind all these diversity. This is sung in very inspiring language in several Upanishads. When our great scientist Sir J. C. Bose addressed the Royal Society in London demonstrating his discovery of a fundamental unity behind all matter, the living and the non-living, they looked differently but behind them he could discover a unity. That demonstrative speech received high comments from the London *Times* at that time. At the end of the speech he referred to this wonderful ancient heritage of ours: "When I saw these things in my scientific demonstration, then I realised the greatness of our ancient sages who discovered sitting on the banks of the Ganges this profound truth of unity in diversity, unity in variety." And he quoted the verse from one of the Upanishads. *Eko vashi sarva bhootantaratma roopam roopam pratiroopamabhuva.* "Those who realised this truth, to them belongs eternal peace. One infinite reality appearing in diverse forms. Realise this truth. That is the way to gain life. That is the way to become truly immortal." That is a wonderful passage he quoted towards the end of the lecture.

Now it is here we have the spiritual philosophical foundation of a tremendous cultural experiment which has continued to exist for these five thousand years and which has given us an immortality which has not been found anywhere else in the world. To give a firm foundation to India's cultural experiment and that too on a continental size, that has been the greatest contribution of the Vedic sages. They have given us firm basis for our culture. In dicovering the mortal behind the immortal man they made culture itself immortal. How many challenges come to this culture

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A fraction of these challenges has destroyed many cultures in the world. But we could stand all this, because of the tremendous spiritual strength behind this culture. We have generally a statement made by many writers and speakers that Indian culture is spiritual. What does it mean? Does it mean that all the people of India are spiritual? We have our own share of wicked people, unspiritual people, evil people. But if this statement has any meaning, it means this, that the direction of Indian culture is towards the high spiritual truth hidden in every human being and secondly the honour that the nation gives to any person depends upon the spiritual quality of that person.

You can study a culture by asking one question. What is the highest human excellence that is appreciated in that culture? In one culture it is military power, in another culture it is more intellectual strength, and in a third culture may be money. In India these are all respected. But the highest respect goes to a man of God. A man who has realised his oneness with all through spiritual development. Throughout history, India has maintained this quality. The highest man of India is man of God, man of spiritual realisation. Our hearts recognise in him something great and in this recognition there is no distinction of creed, no distinction of religion. Any religion showing high spiritual quality will receive adoration from the people of India. It is not creed, it is not dogma, it is just spiritual—that man whatever may be his origin in a particular race, particular religion, he or she has gone beyond these distinctions. He or she has realised the one behind the many. That is why many Muslim mystiques, Christian mystiques and mystiques of other religions are honoured in this country. They represent the spiritual development of man, the spiritual fulfilment of man. This was the background of the future development of Indian culture, commencing from the Vedic period. Very few cultures have received this philosophical and spiritual stimulus from behind compared to our own culture in this country. That is why there has been a succession of great teachers, great spiritual luminaries throughout our history.

Even in the most difficult period, tumultuous period of history, India did not fail to throw up great spiritual teachers. Take the period of the sixteenth century: Babar's invasion, Mughal invasion. The whole country was shattered, especially in the north. So much suffering, so much killing, so many men and women were taken away as slaves at that time. In Babar's history you will find the story. At that very time in that very Punjab we produced a Guru Nanak. He could see all the problems going around—the sufferings of the people—he has referred to

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them in his own songs as well; but it produced a Guru Nanak who was to give a new type of approach to the challenge that India faced at that time harmonising the new element that has come. Several times we have done this harmony. New people came. When the Greeks came, we also took from the Greeks their great ideas, we developed a synthesis of India and Greece at that time. Foreign invaders came, they brought their culture. Slowly we assimilated and India became richer and richer with such assimilation Then came, as I said, the Muslim period. This great invasion, first time—it was all a good way of India's religious relationship. Missionaries came, spoke of great ideas, then came invaders It is when invaders came the challenge became very big. To meet that challenge we had to throw up great personalities, great movements. Guru Nanak represents that tremendous response of the very spirit of India, the new challenge, but it is a positive response. If there is anything good in the new system we shall take it in, so he became a harmoniser of the Hindu tradition and the Muslim tradition; and in all the Bhakti movements that came thereafter, there is the impress of these two, the spiritual heritage of India and the social heritage of Islam. That is why they were democratic.

This democratisation took place in the middle ages. It was needed, because from ancient times we classified the society into four Varnas. As we call them, Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra, is an old classification. Originally it never meant anything more than certain capacities, certain talents, certain roles people play. But slowly it became ossified All evil elements began to enter into it. It was at that time we got Islamic invasion — Islamic influence—and the essential influence of Islam is that social democratic experiment where there is no distinction between man and man. We had all the distinction here. So you can see all the middle age saints, who came at that time, they took the social democracy of Islam and strengthened Indian society at that time. Though conditions were tremendously propitious— everywhere violence, destruction, destruction of temples, destruction of holy places—even then we had that wonderful mind to take what is good from any system that comes from outside. That was a later period. In the early period we had none of these problems.

All the religions that took birth in India were living side by side in harmony and co-operation and there were many such religions. First came the Vedic religion. Vedic religion itself contains many aspects. Then the great Buddhism in the sixth and seventh century B. C. Jainism, Vardhamana Mahavira—these were all wonderful developments. Great spiritual teachers instruct-

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ing the people how to live in peace with oneself, in peace with others. Especially, in the historic period, we have Buddhism. Buddhism has behind it the ancient Upanishads, the great teachings of the *Gita* of Bhagavan Srikrishna—all these are there behind the development of Buddhism. It was strengthening the nation giving it a tremendous spiritual and social vigour and dynamism. The Buddha himself was an extraordinary personality. India has a culture and a philosophy which is essentially impersonal.

Nobody has founded the religions of India. Nobody has founded this culture. A number of thinkers and scientists, their discoveries constituted the basis of the culture of this country. In many other places one individual stands behind a culture or behind a religion We cannot trace any one of these to one single individual. All the Vedas contain so many sages We don't know who they were. We know so little about their lives but their thoughts are wonderful In that sense we have an expression to deal with this cultural heritage including its religious and philosophical heritage. We call it *apaurusheya*. The Hindu religion—what later on came to be known as Hinduism, Hindu philosophy—is *apaurusheya*. There is no *purusha* or person behind it. It is thoroughly impersonal, based upon a number of truths, those truths which are universal. They were discovered by sages You can rediscover them That is the nature of scientific truth So, this science of man in depth, this *adhyatma vidya* is the product of great sages. They gave us this insight and asked us to check up, verify this profound truth.

When Swami Vivekananda addressed the Chicago Parliament of Religions in 1893, he explained this Indian approach to the nature of religion in the Vedas. He said, no books are meant, they are the accumulated treasury of spiritual laws discovered by different persons at different times and the discoverers of these laws we call them "Rishis" or sages. They can come from any caste, any community, any race That is the language used there. And he added, "I am glad to tell this august audience that some of the greatest of these sages were women" Very early period in India's great history had an impersonal background of India's cultural, philosophical, spiritual experiment. No other system can have, can have had, this kind of an impersonal background. Because it is impersonal, therefore, it is universal. No person can dictate to our people But an impersonal truth is universal, as we say in physical science two plus two is four to every one in any part of the world. So also spiritual truths are universal. You can realise them for yourself. This is the background of India's development. Against this impersonal background, India produced a galaxy of mighty personalities in every

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department of life — great scientists, great humanists, great spiritual teachers, great intellectuals, all these types of great personalities came based upon that impersonal background.

In our pre-historic period, we had Rama and Krishna, two great personalities that dominated Indian culture whose influence has gone beyond India to all over South East Asia. In the historic period, we had the Buddha and the Mahavira, two gigantic personalities. The Buddha born as a prince, renouncing that princely life, becoming an ascetic trying to realise this truth in the forest, through deep meditation. This story has been there with us for 2,500 years. What a wonderful event it was in human history! A prince renouncing a kingdom going into the forest and then he enters into a deep meditation, he realises profound truths and within a few centuries the Buddha enters into the hearts of millions and millions of people practically throughout Asia. That is a remarkable movement. The great Mahavira and the Jain religion was confined to India. But Buddhism went outside India. The first great missionary religion and because of the Upanishadic background, that Vedantic background of tolerance, understanding, its intense concord among religions, you find one quality in the expansion of Buddhism within India and outside India, viz., absolute tolerance. Not a single act of violence or persecution you find associated with the expansion of Buddhism in India and outside India. This cannot be said of any religion, born outside India. Every religion born in India has this touch, the spirit of harmony, the spirit of understanding.

In the wake of the Buddha came the tremendous cultural development of India — all round development — our morale went up, our economic conditions went up, so many things became great at that time. Swami Vivekananda says, the most glorious period of India's long history was just two, three hundred years after the Buddha when his spirit of humanism spread throughout the nation. He opened hospitals not only for human beings but for animals as well. That was the compassion that was released by this great spiritual personality.

In the wake of the Buddha came great empires, great political states and the greatest of them was the Mauryan Empire period of Indian history. We are all facing war, violence, international destruction and the thinkers look at India of the third century B.C. producing an Ashoka. H. G. Wells who wrote the first world history, *History of the World*, outlines the world history where he places Ashoka as the greatest crown-head in the whole of human history — one who renounced war as an instrument of political policy and declared international peace

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as the greatest teaching of his empire and his political thoughts. That has not had any second example in human history. Similarly in the world of religion he proclaimed this truth of harmony and concord. That also has no parallel in human history. In various edicts, on rocks and pillars, Ashoka proclaims this humanistic message which India was absorbing from the teachings of the Buddha.

The teachings of the earlier great spiritual teachers at that time, the edict on toleration, is historic. You will not find it in the history of any other country. The twelfth rock edict of Ashoka mentions that "King Priyadarshan"—that was what he called himself, Devanam Priya, King Priyadarshan — "respects every religion, ascetics and followers of every religion and he gives gifts to followers of every religion and he wants that virtue and spirituality must come out of every religion." Then he comes out with a wonderful statement: "If a follower of any religion considers his own religion as the only true one and he disparages religions of others, that very person really disparages his own religion, for in religious harmony, concord is the right way." That particular utterance is something very historic, very unique, couched in the smallest utterance, purest words. Deepest meaning comes out of the utterance. In actual Sanskrit the utterance is *Samavaya eva sadhu*; *samavaya* — concord, *eva* — alone, *sadhu* is correct and proper. "In the world of religion *samavaya* alone is correct and proper and not discord, not violence, not tolerance, etc."

Now, coming from the *Rigveda* getting strengthened through teachings of Srikrishna and the *Gita*, it did not remain merely with saints and sages. It influences our political thought, political state policy, both of big empires and smaller states here and there. That is one of the greatest inheritance of the people of India, the spirit of harmony, the spirit of tolerance, respect for every religion; and there are so many offshoots of this great policy when foreign religions began to come. When I say foreign religions, it means religions that had their birth outside India. Today most of them have become naturalised here. But when they came, they came from outside, what respect, what welcome they received in this country! That is something outstanding.

The first group that came was the Jew, the Israelites. They were received very kindly, sympathetically and with respect by the small State of Kerala. They were persecuted everywhere. Their temples were shattered by Romans in tyranny (70 AD). They dispersed all over the world. And a group came to India

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and to this day they have been here respected, honoured, allowed to practise their own culture and religion. It is an outstanding aspect of human history. They were persecuted all over the world. In every country they were looked down upon. Only in India they received respect and reverence. This is something unique in our history.

Similarly came the first Christian in the first century. And in Kerala itself — St. Thomas. That is a great tradition. That was also given all welcome. This land and the land of many religions respecting every religion. Anyone coming in the name of God or great spiritual teacher, is honoured here. Throughout the outstanding event was the coming of the Iranians, the Parsis, the Zoroastrians. There is a book written in Bombay by one Mr. Nanavati titled *Parsis*. I was fascinated when I read that book. You see a picture of the Parsis coming to the western part of the Gujarat coast of this country and there a scene is depicted in that book. When all the Parsi refugees are there, their high priest is there, and the Prince of that particular State is also there. Then a big meeting is going on and the prince is asking the High Priest : " What do you want us to do for you ?" The High Priest says, " Give us permission to practise our religion and our culture in this country. " Granted " — no argument at all — granted. " What else do you want?" " Give us a piece of land which we can cultivate so that we d › not become a burden on your society." " Granted ". Like that two, three such questions, and the answer is very quick — " Granted. " Then a beautiful scene occurs. That Priest asks for a bowl of milk. Somebody brings a bowl of milk before the whole audience and there he puts a little sugar into that milk and he tells the audience and the king. " This milk represents you, the people of India and the sugar is we the Parsis who came from Iran. We shall sweeten your life here and nothing more. " How true it has been — throughout history of these twelve hundred years. When two cultured people meet together, this is what will happen. Have you any parallel of this in any part of the world?

Today's young generation must understand what is the quality of India's culture, what is the spirit of that culture, what is the wisdom behind that culture. We do not have it today. Our education does not give us any insight into this. That is why we misbehave. We become un-Indian in our attitudes, un-Hindu in our reactions. This we have to understand. But this great development — it is good for us to know. In the wake of Buddhism came, this wide difusion of idea of harmony, tolerance, understanding. The same political state will support two, three religions giving respect and honour to everyone.

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When the Chinese pilgrim Yuan Chwang came to India in the seventh century AD, he saw what an amount of tolerance, what an amount of understanding was there. He saw India a land of great knowledge, great universities — Nalanda, etc. He spent six years in that famous university, Takshashila in Peshawar area, a tremendous university, especially for medical sciences. This land was devoted to knowledge, devoted to wisdom, devoted to humanistic ideas. That is how it happened. But later on bad days came. When you live long enough, there will be ups and downs in life. We have lived long enough. We have seen so many ups and downs. That is why high prosperity. Then comes adversity, centuries together foreign invasions come, our political strength is not strong enough to resist foreign invasions. That is an interesting story.

When you study our culture you find two dimensions to this culture. One is called the *Rishi Vamsha*, the other is called *Raja Vamsha*. First is called the spiritual tradition. Second is called the political tradition. And between the two the *Rishi Vamsha* is always strong, always continuous, unbroken. The spiritual succession of India from the Vedic times up to Shri Ramakrishna has been uninterrupted. But the political succession of India has been interrupted again and again, broken again and again. That is one aspect of our history we must constantly keep in view. I said, even in the most tumultuous period of our history, India produced a Guru Nanak during Babar's invasion. During the most dismal period of history in the nineteenth century, when we were under the British rule, we produced gigantic personalities like Shri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and others So, that is the spiritual strength of India, the spiritual continuity of India. That is called the *Rishi Vamsha* in the historic language but the other is *Raja Vamsha*.

We have been extremely bad in this *Raja Vamsha* period of human life. We are not politically well educated. We are lacking in political wisdom. That is what we are doing in the modern period. I can only mention this when we study the long history of India how many times they have broken up our political states. Sometimes an Empire comes like Mauryan Empire. It was a challenge which met the Greek challenge at that time. Greeks invaded India because we were not united. We had petty little states here and there. They easily could invade some part of India. As a reaction to this, India threw up a mighty Emperor Chandra Gupta Maurya. The Mauryan Empire united much of India at that time. This Empire has come again and again. The Gupta Empire later on. But as soon as some great ruler passes away, weaker rulers come and the empire breaks up into petty

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little states. This has happened again and again. Conjurors of little states often fighting with each other, political unwisdom has been written very very ingloriously in our history. We have to correct it in the modern period. But the spiritual side of it has been outstanding. India has never been an aggressive nation, remember that. That is because of the spiritual background.

When you respect every religion, when you see the same Atman in every being, how can you hate anyone? How can you go and fight and exploit any other person? The Upanishads saw this truth: *Yastu sarvanibhutani atmanyevanipashyate, sarvabhuteshu chatmanam tato navijigupsate.* "When you see the same Atman in every being, when you see every being in the Atman, you cannot hate anyone—only love can come from you." This teaching was strengthened later on by the great teachings of the Buddha and others which have gone deep into the blood of India (Indian people). This is why during these five thousand long years of history there is not a single instance of India practising aggression, military aggression, on outside nations. We had a political strength, we had a military strength very often but we did not believe in it.

Any nation that expands its energy immediately becomes an imperial nation with imperial conquest. Greece did it. Tiny little native City States were there fighting always against each other. They were all unified by Philip, later on by Alexander. The energies so generated could not be contained within Greece. Military had exploded into a military conquest of all the neighbouring countries from Greece up to Punjab. Throughout became the Greek Empire. In recent period we have seen the British Isles—a tiny island nation. They quarrelled amongst themselves all the time. Whenever they quarrelled too much they became united. Many countries do it to overcome the internal difference. You start an aggression outside, you all join together. Britain has done it several times. Swami Vivekananda refers to it. India has not that kind of stimulus to unite, to fight with somebody. We have never done it.

And so, throughout these centuries when we had expanded our energies in Buddhism later on, the Gupta period, etc., we expressed it only in the cultural sphere, spiritual sphere, philosophical sphere. India has invaded the rest of the world philosophically, spiritually again and again. According to a famous British writer, E. J. Arwik—his book is called *The Message of Plato*—you can never understand Plato and Aristotle, without understanding the Upanishads. Study the Upanishads, you will find Plato and Aristotle clear to you. Otherwise you wouldn't

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understand it at all. So India has influenced so many of these foreign countries throughout history, in the world of thought, in the world of ideas, in the world of culture. Look at that scene presented by Plato. Socrates is to drink poison. Even that event can never happen in India. Socrates, the noblest of men, was condemned by the Athenian democracy as one who was misguiding the youth of Athens. Therefore, he must be killed. He must drink poison and die. Can you imagine a man like Socrates being put to death in a country like India? He will be the centre of worship. We will honour him.

Even later when Jesus Christ was crucified in Palestine what s it due to? Intolerance Intolerance of any new idea. Here, if Jesus Christ was here, he would have been worshipped, even in his lifetime as divine That is India's culture. But Bertrand Russell once said about such events like Socrates and Jesus Christ and others, "If you teach the world faster than it can learn, you are in for trouble for yourself." That is what he said. Do not teach the world faster than they can learn. Socrates spoke something beyond the comprehension of Greeks at that time. Jesus did the same thing. Whereas such teachings are common to us.

When the Buddha spoke high ideas, highly metaphysical, highly rational, we all understood it, we accepted it at that time. Sankaracharya did it. Even today Swami Vivekananda — beautiful things he says — criticised our religion, our society. We did not kill him We honour him. That is India. This wonderful country. That culture is behind us, that quality is there. And so you find throughout the ages, this wonderful idea, that particular event in Socrates's life.

I would like to mention, to show the impact of Indian ideas on the Greek mind, which the Westerners cannot understand, except their scholars, men like E. J. Arwik. Socretes drinking poison, so many disciples are sitting around. They are weeping. Socretes is calm. But they are weeping. Socrates chides them: "Send away the women from here and you are also weeping." They became quiet. One of them asks a question — Crito, by name: "Socrates, how shall we bury you?" Socrates smiles and says: "You must first catch me, the real me, before you ask to bury me. Be a good cheer, Crito. You refer to this body. As to the body do with it what you do with other people's:" This can be a chapter in any Upanishad When you read in the *Kathopanishad*, in the *Bhagavad Gita*, "*Nainam chhindanti astraan, nainam dahati paavakaaha, nachaivam kledayam tyaapi, na shoshayati maarutaha* "This Atma, the divine in man, no water can wet it, no fire can burn it, no air can dry it. It is immortal. That is why he could face death with a gentle smile.

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That is the great teaching of India which has influenced some of these cultures by way of mutual collaboration In this modern period we have the great challenge before us. We have a tremendous cultural inheritance. It has got diverse aspects. At one time we thought India is only a religious country. Its culture is only religious or philosophical. No positivistic element is there, in Indian culture. That mistaken idea was there towards the end of the last century. Always religion and philosophy; philosophy and religion. But one supreme aspect of Indian culture everybody could see, that is, its artistic aspect.

The aesthetic element of Indian culture is tremendous. What is the source of that aesthetic element? In the *Taittiriya Upanishat* there is a beautiful description of the supreme divine. That is not only *Sat*, that means real; not only *Chit*, that means pure consciousness; but also *Ananda*. It is the nature of bliss. Out of this bliss element of the divine reality came the tremendous impulse to develop art and aesthetic ideas in this country—literature, poetry and drama, then dance, music of various types. Today India's artistic heritage, in spite of much destruction during the medieval period, still is simply rich and marvellous.

The other great heritage is, as I said, our philosophy and spirituality. So rational. In no other country you will find rational religion. You cannot question. Religions are based on creeds and dogma. Don't question, accept it and go away. If you question, the dogma will break down. In India, on the other hand, the more you question the better. The Upanishads ask you to question. The Buddha asks you to question. Today, Shri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda ask you to question. By questioning alone you can get the truth of religion. Because it is a science of human possibilities. That is the nature of philosophy presented here. They call it Vedanta. The great philosophy of India coming from the Upanishads through various phases, including the Buddhistic phase. That is called the Advaita Vedanta of India, Very rational, very practical, very universal and that is the philosophy that is challenging even the most advanced aspects of modern science today. That is India's cultural inheritance.

We have, as I said, a high cultural inheritance. Our political inheritance has been very weak and today that is the problem that we face in India. We have a bright soul, ever pure and every contemporary civilisation has tried to come in touch with that soul of India. So healthy, so pure It has no evil intentions against anybody, only love and human concern. That is why every contemporary civilization wanted to come in touch with India for two things One, the wisdom of India; two, the wealth of India. Wealth of India invited trade. Trade has been tremendous.

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Even recently you found in Tamilnadu a whole city being unearthed from the sea, a Roman port, where Roman ships are lying below. We are trying to bring them up for the time being. Roman coins are found in various places. In fact, Roman Senate passed a law against Indian trade. Because too much of Roman gold was going on here. India had a tremendous trade with Arabia, with Egypt, with Palestine. In art, with Rome, Greece as well.

So, that is our ancient heritage. That heritage is facing a new challenge. Up to now we had many challenges. We faced them. But today there is a new challenge. How are we going to face this? How did nineteenth century India, coming in touch with a new powerful culture of the West, along with political subjugation, face that particular situation? One thing you must know. There is a tree. It has sap in it. It is strong Now the bark of the tree is supporting the tree. The tree grows; the bark also grows. Then it becomes a living tree. If the bark does not grow along with the tree, the bark will compress the tree and kill it. But a living tree will shed an old bark and put new bark for itself. India is a living tree. It has shed many barks, always new, always fresh, but the tree itself is eternal *sanatanaha.*

So we have this wonderful tree growing, strengthening, widening and, in modern period, the bigger challenge has come and we have met the challenge. We are still strong today. That is the wonderful story for our people today. History is good. You look backwards. But don't look backwards too much. You are living today. See the future. Swami Vivekanada said, therefore, "Look to the past, learn its lessons, you learn its warnings; look to the future and create history" So, I tell all our young people wherever I go, in India, "Do not merely study history. Remember you are now engaged in creating history. Till now you were victims of history. Other people created history. We became creatures of that history for the last thousand years. Today you have the capacity to create history and through this creation you will influence the whole world."

(To be continued)

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AVADHUTA

MAKARAND PARANJAPE

He was naked and dirty,
His hair was shaggy,
And his eye had a wild look
His step was springy,
He grinned widely,
And he roared :
Look at me —
I am God's dog
Grovelling in the back-alleys of the world.
Look at His caprice —
Such is the fate of those
Who have surrendered to Him.

Such brazenness have you given me
That I can go out in the world
Flaunting my begging bowl at every door.
walking through the crowded streets
My feet directed by Your whim
I wander into a back-alley
Halting before an unknown door.
Clapping my hands I wait,
The back-door opens,
A housewife drops the remains
Of the mid-day meal into my cupped hands.
I walk away, smacking my lips in relish,
Wiping my hands on my dusty head.
Such is this supreme path
The envy even of kings !

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Dr. S. RADHAKRISHNAN *
Humanist, Philosopher and Intellectual

Prof. HUMAYUN KABIR

Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan had a remarkable career in many ways. Essentially a self-made man, he had risen to the highest office in the land through sheer merit. A pioneer in more senses than one, he achieved philosophical fame without the extraneous support of Western training or degrees. Till his time, European scholars had come and taught Indian and Western Philosophy to Indian students.

Many Indians had also gone to Western institutions to qualify themselves to teach in Indian universities. Radhakrishnan was perhaps the first who, trained entirely in Indian universities, was invited to teach in a British university. As the first Spalding Professor of Eastern Religions and Ethics at the University of Oxford, he helped to build a bridge of unity for seekers after truth in Eastern religion and Western thought.

Radhakrishnan had achieved recognition the hard way. Starting life as an Assistant Lecturer, he rose steadily till he reached the highest position in the university world A teacher in five and Vice-Chancellor in three Indian universities, he was rightly appointed Chairman of the first Universities Education Commission of Free India. Soon after he was appointed India's Ambassador to the Soviet Union. This was followed by two terms as the Vice-President of India and then he reached the highest office which India can offer to any of her nationals.

The very first contact with Professor Radhakrishnan evoked a feeling of amazement at his phenomenal memory. Intricate philosophical points were disposed of without reference to any notes. Masses of facts were marshalled with the mastery of a consummate general. Quotations, references and statistics were

* Dr. Radhakrishnan's birthday (Sept. 5) is being celebrated all over the country as "Teachers' Day".

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repeated without any apparent effort of memory. The impression was strengthened with every repetition of the experience. Every time one listened to him, one wondered at the tenacious memory which ranged over such a vast field and yet can remember the minutest details in all their intricacies. His writings gave the same impression. The reader is overwhelmed by the volume and range of the Professor's knowledge and the fact that all this burden of learning was carried without strain of effort.

He was one of the very few in India or elsewhere who retained their academic status and yet played a large part in shaping the destinies of the nation. Even while a teacher in a university, Radhakrishnan never stood apart from the political aspirations of the people. In speech and action he was one of the most eloquent interpreters of the Indian demand for freedom and at the same time retained the philosopher's detachment and objectivity of view. When freedom came it was therefore natural that he was called to serve the nation in the political field. It is significant that he had never given up his intellectual approach.

The quality of his mind was that of a steel rapier. Sharp, precise and true, it cut through the masses of detail and isolated the essential elements unerringly. He penetrated to the core of an argument as easily as he unravels the tangled skein of a concrete human situation. A philosopher has been defined as one who picks out the fundamentals in the midst of masses of detail. In thought and in action, Radhakrishnan conformed to this definition.

With all his intellectual brilliance, Radhakrishnan has an essential kindliness. This is an aspect which only they know who have had the privilege of coming into contact with him. The world outside was dazzled by his brilliance and impressed by his wit and humour. To his associates and pupils it was however his essential humanity which was most impressive. With his phenomenal memory, he never forgot any of his pupils. He recognized even casual acquaintances after the lapse of decades. Everyone who came into contact with him had the feeling that Radhakrishnan recognized and valued him as an individual.

Plato rightly said that the world has no future till philosophers are kings and kings become philosophers. Never was this truer than 1962 (when Radhakrishnan became President of India) when conflicting ideologies sought to destroy all the achievements which human civilization had built up through the effort of centuries. Never was it more necessary to analyse with clear vision and judge with dispassionate detachment every issue brought before the public mind. Never have statesmen needed so much the disinterested wisdom which a philosophic temper alone can give. Never was there greater need for a humanist and a teacher to be

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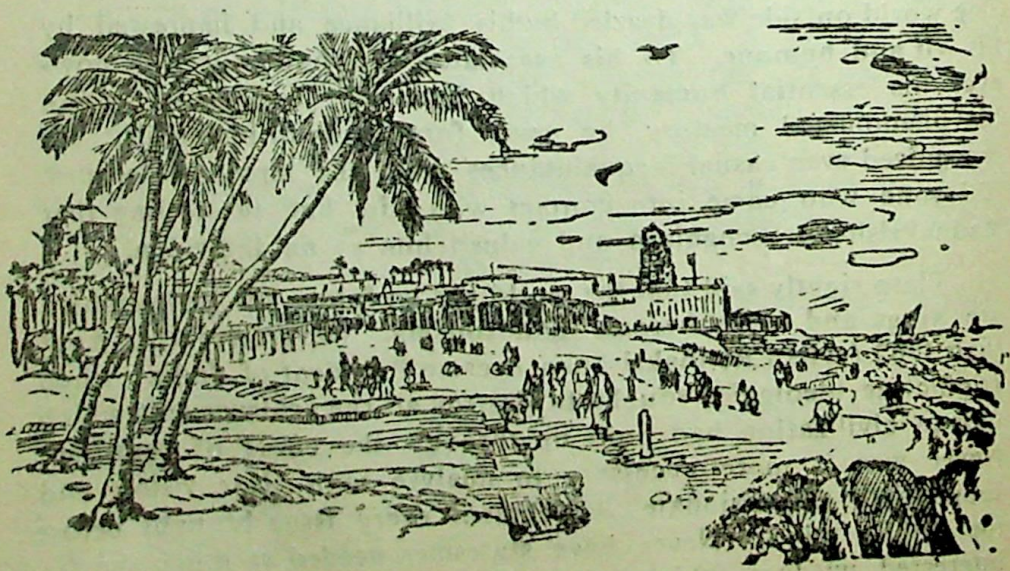
in immediate contact with political problems which, if not handled with honesty, integrity and judgment, might have destroyed a civilization in one common convulsion.

Man's allegiance is divided today between the claims of freedom and organization. Unless these claims can be rcconciled, the outlook is dark for man. Scientific and technical progress has achieved the physical unity of the world. There has unfortunately been no corresponding progress in the realm of moral values. A world united through the achievements of science is therefore administered by men and women divided emotionally and psychologically. In this world divided against itself, man's knowledge has become a potent menace to his future.

Radhakrishnan's contribution to the solution of the impasse lies in his insistence that the claims of individual enterprise and social security were not incompatible. He proclaimed equal devotion to the ideals of political liberty, economic equality and racial tolerance. They were to him different elements of one common good. It was fortunate that at a critical phase of man's development—when the harnessing of nuclear energy opened the possibility of total advance or total annihilation for mankind—a philosopher, intellectual and humanist was the symbol and representative of India's nationhood.



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EDMUND WILSON RECONSIDERED

Dr. D. ANJANEYULU

"Literature is the most significant record of men's struggles which we possess..." wrote Edmund Wilson, the American critic, who died in June 1972 at the age of 77. It would be difficult to think of another writer, American, European or Asian in recent times, who was more deeply committed to the values of literature than Wilson himself. He was a many-sided personality in the world of letters, a multiple-minded writer, with an amazing zest for new areas of sensibility, an inexhaustible curiosity about new fields of knowledge. He was as keenly interested in the poetry of the Beatniks and the plays of the Broadway experimenters as he was in the Dead Sea scrolls and the ruins of ancient Rome. But his versatility had nothing of the touch of the dilettante; his wide range was not achieved at the expense of depth of knowledge or authenticity of understanding.

In his lifetime, Edmund Wilson published over 25 volumes of essays in criticism, reviews, poems and plays, novels and short stories, travelogues and reminiscences. His unpublished work comprises more than two thousand pages of diaries and notes, besides a lot of unfinished jottings and personal correspondence with his literary contemporaries. "The letters and records of writers of genius are," according to Wilson himself, "one of the ways we have of finding out how life was really lived in any given time and place." Some of his diaries and notes are edited by his life-long friend and colleague, Leon Edel, and brought out in 1975 in a substantial volume entitled, *The Twenties*.

The posthumous *Twenties* volume is both revealing and disappointing at the same time. Revealing because it tells us not only about what Wilson thought of many of his companions and contemporaries, with all the spontaneity of his reactions, but also about what he thought of himself. We see his companions here not so much as literary artists with a lot of

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promise backed by performance, but as human beings with foibles of their own, some lovable and some not so lovable. These include such well-known names as Scott Fitzgerald, and his wife Zelda, Ernest Hemingway, Eugene O'Neill, and other rather less known ones like Frank Crowninshield, John Peale Bishop and many others. More than all these, one gets an insight into the character of the diarist himself — Edmund Wilson the writer in the making, the chrysalis of a journalistic contributor.

Commenting on his reputation for "sober judgment", Wilson makes an honest confession: "I remember that such small reputation as I had achieved was apparently based on the supposed sober judgment of a few literary articles and reviews, yet, except when I was writing about literature, nobody could have worse judgment than I and the sober judgment, which, by an effort, I was able to master in print was nothing more than compensation for the disappointments and human limitations of a life which never hit the mark or suited the means to the end,...."

Disappointing because the notes and jottings collected here remain rather disjointed, despite the skilful and conscientious efforts of the editor to present a coherent picture by supplying the missing links, explaining the private context, and explicating the obscure personal references. Not having had the benefit of revision by the author himself, a rare stickler for accuracy and elegance, as well as for clarity, these notes can not help appearing a trifle slipshod and amateurish, compared to the bulk of his other published works. But the sensual quality of a youthful intellectual's responses is much in evidence — his healthy appetite and all his other full-blooded animal urges. They have certainly the merit of being uninhibited.

"A writer strains desperately to express something definitely," as Wilson says, "and all that results is incomplete sketches and inconsecutive fragments — which, after his death, are inordinately prized for their personal flavour." These words fit his diaries to a nicety. The personal flavour is their best, if not their only, recommendation.

They have a few other points, as well, to recommend them to the reader. The Wilson-addict will find in them appetizing bits of the compulsive traveller, the voracious reader and the restless intellectual hungry for ideas as well as for facts. There are musings that go hand in hand with the markings.

He sees enough places of historical interest to turn his thoughts to happiness. Before setting out to catch a glimpse

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of the cloying flamboyance of Venice and the rather subdued grace of Florence, he makes this quip:

"The melancholy thing about happiness is not that it doesn't exist but that it doesn't last."

These few quotations may not be typical of Wilson's best work or even indicative of what he was capable of in his period of maturity. But they should serve as a random sampling from a writer deeply involved in the human condition—in its varied aspects, man, society and nature.

Wilson was, in fact, that rare bird (in America more than in England or Europe) a literary critic who was a historian and sociologist, a writer with the sensibility of a poet and the intellectual equipment of an accomplished linguist. He was a literary journalist, with the authority and objectivity of an academic specialist. He could be described as an encyclopaedist with the eagerness and humility of a freshman at college.

Literature had no doubt been his favourite subject of study from childhood. But this meant for him not only the literatures of America and England, but of the world in general and of Europe in particular. It was his deep regret that the literatures of Spain and Latin America (and maybe also of the Orient) in the original were nearly a closed book for him. He could count French, German and Russian, besides Latin, Greek and Hebrew in his linguistic armoury. Literary and humanistic, rather than linguistic and philological, was, however, his intent in the learning of languages. He was keenly interested in dictionaries and grammars, but he was not laborious like a lexicographer nor could a Browning think of him for a grammarian's funeral.

To be convincingly authoritative, it was not necessary for Edmund Wilson to be dull and dry-as-dust as seems to be the practice with some of the more respectable dons. This was true from the days of his youth when he began playing the sedulous ape, as a contributor to the college magazine at Princeton. His lively mind and lucid style were invariably in evidence in whatever he wrote — a polemical tract in the *New Republic*, a literary feature in *New Yorker*, or a critical essay in *Encounter*, not to speak of his more ambitious works. The 25 and more books that he authored or edited in the course of a writing career of over half-a-century (from the early 'Twenties to the early 'Seventies) cover the best part of the gamut of human experience. They include literary criticism and social reportage, historical research and archaeological studies, thoughts on culture and musings on civilisation, biographical sketches and travelogues, besides short stories and novels, poems and plays.

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Like a few great writers before him, e. g., William Hazlitt, Washington Irving and Taine, Wilson was apt to describe himself as a journalist. And he was that in the best sense of the word, which admits of no trace of derogation. He represented in himself the happy marriage of journalism and literature, bringing together the contemporary sensibility of the one and the high seriousness of the other.

A creative writer *manque* — that is how a critic is often described by some writers, especially those who might have felt the lash of his whip. But it would be not only grossly unfair but factually erroneous to stick this label to Edmund Wilson. For one thing, he was a successful creative writer in his own right, who had chosen to sharpen his wits on the whetstone of criticism. He might not have been a poet of the first rank, like T. S. Eliot, Robert Frost, E. E. Cummings or John Carlos Williams, but he wrote poems (*Poets, Farewell*). He was no fiction-writer of the stature of Hemingway, Faulkner or Fitzgerald, — but he wrote two significant novels ("I thought of Daisy" and "Memoirs of Hecate County"). You could not call him a Samuel Beckett, a Tennessee Williams or a Eugene O'neill, but he wrote a good number of experimental, intellectual plays (*This Room* and *This Gin and these Sandwiches*, *The Duke of Palermo* and other plays). For another, the best of his criticism has the quality of creative writing, in its freshness of approach, integrity of imagination and originality of enunciation.

Does the perfect critic exist? One does not know. And you never can tell, from the contemporary scene. But you can easily think of what you expect of him. He must have most, if not all, of the following characteristics :

1. Wide learning ; 2. Catholicity of tests ; 3. High literary standards ; 4. Sensitivity to language ; 5. Spirit of justice, tempered with sympathy and understanding; 6. Flexibility of mind to deal with a variety of writers and their writings ; 7. Sharpness of insight to separate the grain from the chaff, to see the fashionable and phoney from the genuine and lasting ; 8. A lively awareness of contemporary values ; 9. A deep sense of the past for seeing things in the correct perspective ; and 10. An unimpeachable integrity of intellectual character.

The search for the "ideal critic", like that for the philosopher's stone may often prove elusive and fruitless. But it cannot be easily given up on that account. Edmund Wilson was ever busy, discovering "the critic who does not exist!" He knew that no criticism could make or unmake the creative artist. But he had a high conception of the function of criticism and the equipment essential for a critic. His views on the subject were well-defined.

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"... I am strongly disposed to believe that our contemporary writing would benefit by a genuine literary criticism that should deal expertly with ideas and art, not merely tell us whether the reviewer "let out a whoop" for the book or "throw it out of the window."

"In a sense, it can probably be said," observes Wilson, "that no such creature exists as a full-time literary critic—that is, a writer who is at once first-rate and nothing but a literary critic; there are writers of poetry, drama or fiction, who also write criticism, like Coleridge, Dryden, Poe, and Henry James; and there are historians like Renan, Taine, Saint-Beuve, Leslie Stephen, and Brandes, whose literary criticism is a part of their history." He regrets that in America neither kind of criticism has been very highly developed, adding, "I fear that we must take this as a sign of the rudimentary condition of our literature in general."

He then proceeds to explode the overblown myth that the poets and other creative writers are, *ipso facto*, the best critics of literature They are not; nor can they be, unless they specially equip themselves for a task that often proves as thankless as it is strenuous. We know only too well how casual and unreliable a critic, a poet, otherwise ill-informed, could make, in his familiar state of self-hypnosis.

"The poets, the dramatists and the novelists," maintains Wilson, with his refreshing candour, "too often lack the learning and the cultivated intelligence to give us, in works of art, the full benefit of the promising material supplied by experience and imagination; and it may in general be said that where our writers of biography and history fail is precisely in their inability to deal adequately with works of literature."

That America could, in this century, boast at least one first-rate and full-time literary critic in the person of Edmund Wilson is no small credit to its modern writing. But, Wilson was quite an untypical American, as a writer and as a man. For all his wholesome patriotism, he was no flag-waving New Englander, to be easily excited over the achievements of the current immortals among his country's men of letters. He had too much of the classical restraint and sense of form to fall in love with the slovenly and the slipshod, passing under the guise of the modishly formless. The best of the American writing should, according to him, be found good enough by supra-national standards. It should certainly be able to stand up to the best of Europe, he would argue.

In paying tribute to new talent, where it was due, Wilson did not choose to overlook any weakness inherent in it. He wrote

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copiously and even generously about contemporaries like Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway. But he was not afraid to be harsh, where it was felt necessary in the interest of truth. Of the former, a personal friend of his, he had this to say:

"....he has been given imagination without intellectual control of it; he has been given the desire for beauty without an aesthetic ideal; and he has been given a gift for expression without very many ideas to express."

Hemingway once said in a letter to Wilson: "You are the only man writing criticism, who or whom I can read when the book being criticised is one I've read or known something about. I can read almost anybody when they write on things I don't know about." As good a compliment as any that could be paid to a critic worth his salt.

Not identified with any intellectual coterie or esoteric school of thought, Wilson had pressed onto service, in his own critical endeavour, all the possible methods that might yield the most fruitful results. The psycho-analytical and the historical methods adopted by him, act as checks and balances against one another. He was ready to see the good in the scientific method of Dr, F. R. Leavis and company, though in a limited way. But he did not discard the biographical method of the earlier scholars. An ardent admirer of Lenin, whom he regarded as the greatest hero of our time, he was much in sympathy with the Marxian interpretation of literature. More than familiar he was with the economic argument advanced by the advocates of dialectical materialism. He, no doubt, granted that it could explain the social forces behind the emergence of a particular work of art, but it did not, for him, provide the key to its aesthetic appeal. The breadth of his critical interests was, in fact, one of his chief assets—or liabilities (?) as some others would have it. He could be called a conservative liberal and a pragmatic idealist in the field of criticism.

A serious study of comparative literature, which is fast coming into vogue the world over, had a vigorous advocate in Wilson, when such a study was far from being fashionable in his early days His belief in its liberalising influence was quite unconnected with the prospect af affluent fellowships and well-endowed chairs in the subject

In his attempt to go to the root of the matter, in the study of literature, Wilson could be quite unconventional. He developed the habit of breaking down formal and superficial barriers, such as those between prose and verse and between *one language and another* Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* would, for instance, yield him apter parallels in subject matter, to Pope's *Rape of the Lock* than

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any other book of verse. He could make an unexpected comparison between the genious of Dickens and Kipling and underline the tortured psyche, throwing light on many new areas.

It would not, however, be an easy task for us to define Wilson's role in American life and letters to a nicety. Like GBS in his time, he had been something of an non-conformist and a free-thinker, ever at loggerheads with the Establishment. While at home, he was never tired of pricking the average American out of his complacency and casualness. He was the intellectual gadfly. While in England, he would stand up to the insular approaches and mandarin attitudes of the English middle class. In Europe of which he loved France, Italy and Soviet Russia, he would not hesitate to affirm the new values of American life, with its naturalness and youthful vigour. "We must try to stick close to the realities of contemporary American life, so new, and so different from anything that has ever been known..." he wrote in 1929. Many years latter he lived to say in *The Cold War and the Income-Tax* something more damaging on the American system than anybody else before him.

He was an important advocate of "lost causes" (like decency, gentleness, privacy and contemplation), not afraid of being branded "an old fogey". He deplored the progressive decay of the reading habit in the younger generation. For him, literature is something that is read for pleasure not worked upon for research or grappled with for a prestigious fellowship.

It was tempting for journalists to compare Edmund Wilson with Dr. Samuel Johnson for their unrivalled stature. But Wilson was never so dogmatic or perverse in his likes and dislikes. He reminds one of Matthew Arnold in his gallant fight against provincialism and philistinism and in his classical ideal of perfection. But he was not half so vague or pontifical. Restrained and objective like Leslie Stephen he was never so distant or matter-of-fact. Learned and meticulous like George Saintsbury, whom he so much admired, he was neither so bookish nor so digressive. He could be scholarly without being scholastic. He wore his learning lightly and could be fair and precise, without being heavy and academic.

For over five decades, Edmund Wilson was the self-appointed watchdog of values in American literature. Never did he lose sight of the forces of national history and the trends of world literature. In the unceasing appraisal of imaginative writing,

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with the link between aesthetic appreciation and social awareness, he had few equals. He was found wanting in originality by some for not establishing a new school of thought in criticism. So was Dr. Radhakrishnan in the realm of Indian philosophy. Both were interpreters *par excellence*. Both had a flair for lucid and balanced exposition. Edmund Wilson was a humanist no less than a critic; a thinker no less than a writer.

THE STRUGGLE

K. SELVARAJ

For being flowered
In this rapt rat hole
Days limp,
Weary months wear on,
And withered seasons wound up
As wretched red sun constant here.

Day in and day out
We rot and rust out;
Worn out wrinkles jot down
Their said tales frightful,
And make us poor scarecrows.
Still crores here madly struggle
To drag the heavy laden juggernaut.

Why don't we cease to tussle
With Time, the jubilant juggler?
Or dare to jugulate the callous oppressors?
Lest, what the hell are we travelling tediously for?

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INDIAN ENGLISH DRAMA
Models and Techniques

Dr. S. KRISHNA BHATTA

Among the various forms of Indian writing in English, drama seems to lag far behind poetry and fiction However, ever since the English language firmly established its roots in the country, there has been writing of plays in English in spite of their generally poor stageworthiness Though it is rather difficult to keep track of all the plays and playlets published in book-form and in periodicals so far, some 400 plays have been included in the latest Bibliography compiled by the present writer and published in *Perspectives on Indian Drama in English* (*OUP 1977*) under the auspices of Karnatak University, Dharwar.

Regarding the models and techniques employed by the playwrights of both the pre-Independence and the post-Independence phases, it is clear that some playwrights like Sri Aurobindo rather unnecessarily allowed themselves to be influenced by the Elizabethan drama and did not make use of the traditional Sanskrit theatre and folk-stage of our country; while there are also examples like the plays of Girish Karnad, Arati Nagarwalla, Partap Sharma and others where some techniques of our ancient dramatic tradition are employed with advantage.

In *Perseus*, *The Viziers* and other plays, Sri Aurobindo strictly resorts to the Elizabethan model — particularly the five-plot structure, sub-plots and lengthy speeches in verse.

Though Kailasam shows a better stage sense than Sri Aurobindo, he too does not evince much technical innovation. He does not demonstrate the same liking towards the models and techniques of our classical drama and folk-stage as he has for drawing his themes from our ancient lore. Though he does not fully follow Sri Aurobindo in adopting Elizabethan models and techniques, he is not completely free from their influence. In fact, he tries, though unsuccessfully, to cast the

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lives of his heroes like Karna into the Elizabethan mould of a tragic hero ; and, while the portrayal of Karna falls for want of a major tragic flaw of his own, that of Keechaka suffers from excessive idealisation. Further, the five-set structure employed in *The Curse* bears little relevance to the development of the plot. Even in the playwright's much-admired piece. *The Purpose*, he ignores the utility of our dramatic tradition : for example, a Sutradhara would well introduce the powerful theme to the audience, and folk-motifs could have been effectively employed to present Ekalavya's forest abode in a natural setting.

Compared to Sri Aurobindo and Kailasam, other major playwrights like Harindranath Chattopadhyaya and Bharati Sarabhai are less influenced by Elizabethan drama. Chattopadhyaya presents the lives of the Indian saints in an almost traditional manner, though he does not directly follow the models and techniques of our classical as well as folk-stage ; at times we see a shadow of the Sutradhara in the form of a Preface (as in *Jayadeva*). There are also examples like *Siddhartha* where he overdoes the use of the Prologue, the Epilogue, the chorus and modern stage-techniques like light and sound effects. Sarabhai too shows a greater inclination to Indian techniques than the Western. In fact, though the chorus in her, *The Well of the people* (employed for indicating change of scene) reminds us of the similar technique in Greek plays, she is obviously influenced by the folk-stage of our country : and in her *Two Women*, she brings out the tragic effect without resorting to the use of typically Elizabethan lengthy speeches and sub-plots. As regards Asif Currimbhoy, the success of his one-act plays is mainly due to Western influence. But, most of his plays may fail on the stage on account of his excessive dependence on cinematographic techniques and other stage gimmicks.

So far as the minor playwrights of both phases are concerned, it is rather difficult to trace the influences regarding the models and techniques employed except in the cases of a few ; but many do not seem to have taken the problem seriously at all.

Of the Western influence, the compact one-act play form appears to have been a more dominant influence than Elizabethan drama. Regarding the latter, the five-act structure is employed in only some plays like V. V. S. Aiyangar's *Ramarajya*, Sadar-Joshi's *Acharya Drona*, Prabhu's *Apes in the Parlour* and Gaffor's *Dr. Lover*. But, the mere division into " five acts " is deceptive for the " Acts " are only scenes. There are also examples of a few plays like Krishnaswami's *The Flute of Krishna* wherein the Elizabethan lengthy speeches and verse-form are employed (of course, marring

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the stage effect) in addition to the five-act structure. On the other hand, the Western one-act play form serves as a model to many playwrights; but it is rather difficult to trace the influence of short compact plays by Sanskrit dramatists like Bhasa in this regard. Anyway the compactness of the form must have been a major attraction to these playwrights in their attempts to dramatise an episode or focus light on a particular aspect of one's life. This can be observed in some of the plays already considered: Abbas's *Invitation to Immortality*, Borgaonkar's *Bhasmasura*, Currimbhoy's *The Refugee* and *The Miracle Seed*.

As this study reveals, only a few authors have attempted employing the full-fledged play form with some success. Apart from the plays of Sri Aurobindo and Kailasam, Ramaswami Sastri's *Droupadi*, Mrinalini Sarabhai's *Captive Soil*, Mrs. Ghosal's *Princess Kalyani*, Fyzee-Rahamin's *Daughter of Ind* are some examples worth mentioning. As regards two-act and three-act play models, there are quite a good number in both the pre-Independece and the post-Independence phases. There are cases where these structures are suited to the requirements of the plot; to illustrate, Kailasam's *The Purpose*, Chattopadhyaya's *The Coffin*, Bharati Sarabhai's *Two Women*, Currimbhoy's *Inquilab*, Gurcharan Das's *Larins Sahib*. But, in some cases like Lakhan Deb's *Tigerclaw*, the compact one-act play structure would have been more suitable than the three-act structure.

Even in employing Western techniques such as the Prologue, the Epilogue, etc., there is a marked difference between playwright and playwright. While Sri Aurobindo employs the Prologue in *Perseus* to introduce a conversation between the goddess Athene and the god Poseidon and thereby indicate the future conflict between the good and the evil, Chattopadhyaya's Prologue in his *Siddhartha* presents the image of the present crisis caused by the nuclear race. The Prologue and the Epilogue serve as two terminal props to the sequences of the plot in Mrinalini's *Captive Soil*, while Shanti Jhaveri makes these techniques useful in linking the past and the future with the present in *Deluge*; and, in Fyzee-Rahamin's *Daughter of Ind*, they are used to expound the love-theme. There is a prayer to the Goddess of Learning in Mrs. Ghosal's prologue, which partly performs the function of the Sutradhara (who could have been directy introduced with advantage in many such plays). Also, the flashback technique has been occasionally employed by some playwrights. The flashback employed in Swami Sivananda's *Radha's Prem* to present an episode in Lord Krishna's life infuses some dramatic effect into a prolonged discussion about the Lord.

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Some playwrights like Sri Aurobindo do not seem to rest content with adopting the Elizabethan model and technique; and they make their theatre reverberate with numerous echoes of the Elizabethan drama also. In the case of Sri Aurobindo, the selection of titles like *The Viziers of Bassora* (similar to *Timon of Athens*), the sequence of raising the dagger and lowering it by Aslaugh in *Eric* (like Macbeth), Cleopatra's mistaking her son Timocles' flattery for real love in *Rodogune* (like King Lear)—are some of the Shakespearian echoes heard. Kailasam makes a deliberate attempt to impart the colour of Shakespearian tragic heroes to his Karna and Keechaka. Moreover, Lobo Prabhu makes his character Benny (in *Apes in the Parlour*) repeat Mark Antony's words. The effect of all such echoes is to emphasise the derivative nature of these plays.

There are many instances where our classical and folk-stage techniques would have been more useful to the playwright than the Western ones. One can imagine the stage effect in *The Beggar Princess*, had Dilip Kumar Roy and Indira Devi employed an Indian setting and a Sutradhara (instead of the Prologue and the Epilogue) to dramatise the life of the Indian princess-saint Mira; and the employment of a few folk songs and dances indicative of her popularity among the masses would have made the presentation far more realistic. There are plays like Smt. Thakur's *Mother and Child* where the Pravesaka (reporting) technique would have filled the wide gap existing between the first two acts: Act 1 presenting the maiden Kunti's curiosity to test the effect of the sage's boon and the consequent birth of Karna; and Act 2 showing Kunti as the mother of the Pandavas.

Instances are not totally lacking where playwrights have looked to our classical and folk-stage techniques. The reportage-technique of the classical Sanskrit drama comes to the help of Arati Nagarwalla in her attempt at making the audience know the particulars about the killing of the tiger in her *The Bait*. While Gurcharan Das resorts to the "voices" technique (different voices behind the stage) to depict the troubled mind of Lawrence in *Larins Sahib*, the technique of an obscure figure's speech (a sort of *Asariravani*, a voice of the invisible) solves Sadar-Joshi's problem of presenting Drona's mental conflict (in *Acharya Drona*) between his ideal and the practical worlds To show the reaction in the minds of his characters in *The Professor has a Warcry*, Partap Sharma employs a mimic demon of our Indian folk-dance *Kathakali* but its connection with the situation is so loose that one gets confused about the symbol.

It is in the authors' translations of their own plays that we can find better instances where the Indian folk and classical

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stage-techniques have been successfully employed. Dalal employs the Sutradhara-Nati technique of the classical Sanskrit drama in *Victory*. Karnad leaves many playwrights far behind by making a dexterous use of our folk-stage conventions and techniques like the Bhagavatar, prayer to Lord Ganesha, masks, curtains, dolls and story-within-a-story in his *Hayavadana* and the comic pair of Akara and Makara type in his *Tughlaq*.

Thus it is clear from the survey that the playwrights in both the phases have by and large ignored our ancient dramatic tradition comprising both the classical Sanskrit stage and folk-theatre (though here and there we find a few experiments in this regard). This is perhaps an important reason why Indian drama in English has remained mostly derivative and imitative.

MEET ME

Smt. SHYAM KUMARI

Glimpsed by me as perfect Beauty,
If you want to reveal yourself, O my love,
In the repulsive leper
And the deformed and ugly,
I'll kiss their feet.

Sensed by me as sweet Ecstasy,
If you want to course through me, O my love,
As the misery of the beggar,
And the heart break of the bereaved,
It will entrance me.

Fount of all Knowledge,
If you want to unveil your light, O my love,
In the babbling of an idiot,
And the chatter of the childish,
I'll love thee as yourself.

Meet me as and how you will,
But, O my love, meet me at last!

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ROSE ATTAR

(Short story)

SRIPADA SUBRAHMANYA SASTRY

Translated from the original in Telugu by
DR. M VEERABHADRA SASTRY

Another step forward, the Dewan comes into view.

Several kinds of people, fawning, waiting and calling on him in his crowded room are already in view. They included prominent citizens, kinsfolk of the king and employees of various grades. Some of them noticed the new arrival, Shukurali Khan.

Khan stood near the room and peeped in. He straightened himself and with stretched hands held the small Attar vial, pulled the cork out and after a split second replaced it.

The fragrance that spread in the air in that flash of time made everyone of those present take a serious note of it. Some of the Jawans nearby felt intoxicated. The gentlemen inside the chamber inhaled deeply with enlarged nostrils. The Thanedar who stood behind the Dewan glancing over the papers before him looked up with surprise and interest: "So, the Khan comes!" he said to himself and diverted his glance in embarrassed puzzlement.

Dewanji jerked his head up and in a stern voice demanded; "What odour is this?" His irritation found an expression in feigned cough. A dark patch in pleasant moonlight.

The Attar made of khus-khus gave, no doubt, a strong scent but was very pleasing. The Dewan calling it an "odour" moved many of the audience to mirth, but they suppressed their giggle, transferring it to their looks. The Thanedar turned his head glancing significantly at a prominent man in the audience. Even the Jawans felt the coarseness of the Dewan and bent their heads biting their lips.

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Khan was stupefied. Dewanji's choice of words, he felt, came as a portent. The Dewan was just around fifty and there could be no justification for him to be averse to the fragrance.

Very recently, Khan visited Golkonda. It took two difficult months for him to gain entry into the palace. He had to work out his way to the vizier for over several weeks But, once he could reach him, there were no further problems. The vizier was clay in his hands as soon as the same khus-khus Attar was shown to him. Not only the vizier, the others too and even the Nawab himself had appreciated the quality of his scents.

As against the turmoils at Golkonda, it took two difficult months for him to gain entry into the palace. He had to work out his way to the vizier for over several weeks. But, once he could reach him, there were no further problems. The vizier was clay in his hands as soon as the same khus-khus Attar was shown to him. Not only the vizier, the others too and even the Nawab himself had appreciated the quality of his scents.

As against the turmoils at Golkonda, it was a walk over here in Peddapuram. The day on which he set his foot, he gathered all the information necessary. The Thanedar was won over the second day. On the following day he gained entry into the fort. And now, this blockade!

The Hindu royalty and gentry did not fancy much for pleasures like this, he knew. That did not mean they were cool to such things. Even so, Khan could not swallow the fact that a person only next to the king was as insensitive as to call the fragrance of a rare Attar merely an "odour". It was not compatible with the dignity of a royal court. Was it such that the Dewan was unaware of the slur he was creating on the image of his ruler or was it an indication of the royal attitude too being similar?

Khan grew uneasy about the outcome of his trip to Peddapuram but he did not give way to despondency. He looked at the door-keeping Jawans with vacant eyes.

The Thanedar directed his glance to the door and called the Jawan in a loud voice. The Jawan went in obediently and reported that an Attar merchant had come seeking audience. The Thanedar added in a low tone: "Yes, the same saheb I told you about" But the Dewan took no note immediately. After a few seconds, the Dewan said, without lifting his head and in a biting tone, "Does the fellow wish to open a shop right in the fort?"

Khan's face became white with cold rage. The Jawan and even the Thanedar were dumbfounded. But an old scholar among

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the audience opened his toothless mouth seizing the opportunity, "If you kindly pardon my impertinence...." Dewanji still continued to exert feigned absorption in the papers before him. But the scholar continued undeterred, enlisting the support of others by his earnest looks. "It may not be entirely charitable to remark that the fellow is trying to open a shop here. However he appears to be an enlightened man. Because the Thanedar could only introduce him, his abilities remain unexplored. And, would it be proper for such a one to speak about his own accomplishments? So, I think he did a right thing in making his Attar speak for himself. Quite appropriate, is it not? He comes from Delhi, where he moves in noble circles. He deserves the honour of an audience."

Dewanji kept silent. But he put the pen down and picked up his snuff box. The Thanedar knew it was an indication that the Dewan relented. He directed the Jawan to send Khan in. Dewanji sat with knitted eyebrows. His eyes sparkled with some sudden devilry.

Khan came in and salaamed the Dewan. "I have come all the way from Delhi for the honour of presenting myself before your honour," he said.

The Dewan responded only with a batting of his eyelids. "On what purpose?"

"I make Attars, your honour. I was told that Peddapuram was the only kingdom worth visiting after Golkonda empire in the south. So, I came on wings to your august person"

"Yes, yes. One on wings is sure to fly over to one place or the other."

Khan was hurt but did not lose his balance. "As your honour so aptly put it, one had to fly to a place where he hopes to find patrons like your honour. That was why, four generations ago my forefathers left Persia for good and migrated to Delhi. They had bright chances to join the army but could not leave the traditional skill that went with the family. We have been preparing Attars under the great patronage of the Delhi emperors."

Noncommittally, the Dewan said, "Could be." He still wore a stern look. Khan went on.

"I obtained leave from my father and came down to the south in order to serve the royalty here. I am happy that the Nawab of Golkonda and his viziers appreciated my industry."

"Then, it is well."

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"As I already submitted, I heard about the Peddapuram kingdom and its great traditions. I came rushing here. With your kind indulgence, sir," said Khan and placed a small container with a red soft silk lining before the Dewan. A small bottle lay in it. The eyes of the audience were filled with greed as Khan explained:

"This is jasmine Attar. The bottle contains only two tolas of it. But it took two spring seasons to make it."

The Dewan just made a splutter of a sound with his tongue.

"It would be improper on my part to eulogize on my product. Your honour can assess it as well. But one request. Please keep the bottle a little away from the face when your honour uncovers the cork."

All the men around steadied themselves with concentration anticipating the strong scent. The Dewan scoffed: "As if we are dying to uncover it."

It was with difficulty that Khan maintained his poise at the crude, crushing words of the Dewan. He was not unaware how men turn into brutes intoxicated by power. Moving among thousands of officers in Delhi, he learnt the ways of the world. He was not incapable of hurling back a fitting retort. But that would not help the purpose on which he went there. Shukurali Khan valued his reputation more than the monetary gains. For that, it was essential for him to meet the king. The kings were usually surrounded by beasts like this.

He resolved to keep unruffled even if it demanded much effort. An alternative to a cutting repartee was to allow him to make an ass of himself. As the Khan was about to say something, the Thanedar intervened, "Dewanji would scrutinize the Attar at a convenient time. You may meanwhile submit why, you came here and what you want."

The Khan took out another small casket with a green silk lining. It held a small glass vial with some red essence in it. The bottle was sparkling like a diamond. All eyes were rivetted on it except, of course, those of the Dewan. Blow after blow to Khan! But he remained stolid.

"I prepared this Attar specially for His Majesty, the king of Peddapuram, I heard that the Nawab of Golkonda favoured Attar of khus-khus and so specially made it. With a similar devotion, I prepared this rose Attar for His Majesty, as I learnt that he favoured this variety. The bottle contains only a tola of it. I used Kashmir variety of roses for that. In and around Delhi, we get only the Persian roses. So, it took full two years for the preparation.

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Khan's narration won appreciation and goodwill among the men in the room. Dewanji did not give out any such feelings. He simply said in a monotone: "No surprise. It takes time if one wants to produce good things." He then added jeeringly: "At what cost price?"

Dewanji saw the effect of his words on Khan who was petrified and felt a viscious pleasure. The onlookers were dumbfounded.

A few moments passed. Khan controlled himself and found tongue. "You are aware, your honour, that it is intended as a present to His Majesty, the king of Peddapuram, a diamond among the royalty of the south. A question about its price cannot crop up except in disregard of propriety," he said in a hurt, yet dignified, tone.

Dewanji feigned innocence and said: "We put the question only in the process of assessing how well you are honouring our lord."

"Am I to conclude that there is no one to assess such things in the royal court?"

"You tell me it is intended for my king. Do you, then, think somebody could uncover the lid and examine the contents before it reached him?"

"If you graciously permit me to present....."

"Well, we are the king's servants and we have certain duties and functions."

The eyes of the old scholar gleamed with mockery at the words of the Dewan. Was the Dewan behaving like one? Khan ventured a sarcastic dig: "Exactly what I would submit, your honour!"

The Dewan went on resenting the interruption: "Do the viziers at Delhi simply allow anything purported to be intended for their Emperor without the least scrutiny?"

All the men in the room who were sympathetic towards Khan recognized the impasse created by the evil genius of the Dewan. Among themselves, they communicated with one another their disgust through mute signs. The Thanedar in an attempt to save the situation, addressed his words to Khan: "Dewanji is extremely busy attendingy to some important matters. You may go now and come to wait on him later."

Khan felt the warmth of sympathy from all others which soothed him in a way. He salaamed the Dewan and retraced his steps.

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By the time he crossed the threshold of the room, a Jawan joined him and handed over the two containers.

Khan could not think of sleep that night. Neither could he relish food. He felt a dull pain in his head.

Scenes from his meeting with the Dewan earlier appeared and reappeared before him and made him live again those wounded moments of shame, helplessness, anger and hurt. Pointed glances of the Dewan, and his enquiry about the cost price of the rose Attar haunted his mind

Life never moves uniformly smooth. Its ripeness and maturity warrant hurdles and challenges. There was pleasure in overcoming unforeseen difficulties, Khan reflected.

While the qualities of head lead life in some cases, the qualities of heart dominate in the other. Where more importance goes to the brain, people tend to become rigid and unsympathetic. Arts and appreciation of arts and skills go closer with the qualities of heart. The bliss arising out of artistic creation or temperament is the culmination of an untiring pursuit of artistic interests, with pure heart, dedicated attention, and undivided disposition toward keeping oneself and people around happy and comfortable. The creations of such people lend meaning and purpose and enrich the human existence. Khan was one such man.

Khan would not have felt upset if the Dewan refused his offer. Khan was never after money. He longed for recognition. If what he wanted was mere prosperity in trade, what need was there for him to undertake the arduous journey to the south ? Viziers, opulent persons, dignitaries of the Moghul court — all the more those who could appreciate his work — were many in Delhi. What brought him all the way was the reputation of the king of Peddapuram, Sri Sri Sri Vatsavayi Chaturbhuja Timma Jagapati Maharaja, as connoissuer of supreme taste —a greater one than the Sultan of Delhi Khan could not resist the temptation. He did his best as he never did in his life till then. He flew on wings to the Andhra country, to Peddapuram.

And in Peddapuram ! Did he land in a ditch with thorny bushes ! He discovered that the diamond after which he came lay concealed in a heap of worthless pebbles. The dirty trick played by the Dewan was beyond even the much intrigue-given viziers of Delhi. The Peddapuram kingdom that was so attractive from afar was disappointing from within. He felt like one who lost his way in a forest of wild animals. He cursed himself for venturing into an unknown land.

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But, how could the Maharaja know how an artist was suffering at the hands of his heartless servants? Are not many instances of dissatisfaction and resentment even in the reigns of great and just rulers merely caused by the stupid overactions of unfit men in higher seats of echelon?

Khan began wondering whether he could ultimately get out with self-respect in tact, let alone honours from the court.

A distant crow of a cock heralded the dawn.

The first thing Khan did was to run to the Thanedar and fall at his feet. The Thanedar was aware that no one till date had produced such magnificent Attar in the court of Peddapuram. He was also aware that the Dewan did not want Khan to receive the honour due to him. Khan would rather lay down his life than disclose the cost price of the Attar If it went to the notice of the king, he would undoubtedly extend his generous patronage to Khan. The Thanedar knew this for certain.

The Thanedar sat pensive for a while and abruptly shot a question, "Can you take a risk?"

"I find no way of keeping up my pride. Why live without it?"

"Then, listen carefully. It may not be possible for you now to enter the fort. In case you can enter, you may not be able to advance. Supposing you somehow advance, you cannot stay there long enough. But, if you can manage, there is a way to fulfil your desire."

"I am all ears, sir."

"The Maharaja mounts his best horse and goes out for a ride at seven thirty every morning. You should make an endeavour to catch his eyes after he reaches the open yard inside the fort and before he crossed the main gate. At least, your khus-khus Attar must draw his attention to you."

"As you command, sir."

"Listen, Dewanji might have guessed this possibility. He would have taken steps to prevent the occurrence. Anyway, no orders have been issued until this minute. If you are lucky enough or the Maharaja is, this may not cross the mind of the Dewan This is all I can do for you. Now, you are on your own."

Khan let out a deep sigh.

"The one I presented yesterday to you was sandalwood Attar. Please accept this bottle of khus-khus. Dewanji had not been kind to me and had no chance to accept this. You were kind enough to guide me in what could be my last move. If I survive

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this day, I assure you, I shall cherish the help you rendered until my last breath."

Khan bent his head and salaamed him thrice before hastily withdrawing.

Khan entered the fort.

He passed through the semi-circular path leading into the open yard. Four soldiers who were on watch swarmed around him and stopped him on the edge

Blood boiled in Khan. With a mighty effort he mustered a composed appearance. "I am proceeding to call on Dewanji. Why do you stop me?"

"This is not the proper time to call on him. Go back," they cried harshly.

"I am not a total stranger. I called on him yesterday evening on business. It is in that connection I go again."

"Not now."

"Then lead me to the office-room of the Thanedar."

"The Thanedar is with Dewanji."

"In that case, I shall wait in the room till he returns."

"No waiting business in the office. You may as well go to his residence in the town and wait there."

The discussion went on.....pleads and counter pleads.

Khan gratefully remembered the advice—"Somehow manage to stay on long enough." The soldiers had their orders from the Dewan not to let Khan advance. They felt happy that they could stall him. One by one several other people thronged the scene. Some men moving in and out too stopped and looked on. Some persons of nobility who played chess and cards with the Maharaja arrived and watched the scene with interest.

New arrivals began enquiring as to what was happening The soldiers explained the situation. Time passed on in a heavy tread. Khan heard his inner voice telling him that he had but to keep his ground for a mere few minutes more. Someone came rushing and whispered to the soldiers who were content to have managed to halt Khan's advance. They suddenly moved into action and pressed Khan to get away.

Khan knew that the Maharaja had started. And so the soldiers wished to send him away. They might not argue any more but push him out of the way physically. Had all his effort to go in vain? Cannot he do anything?

Khan trembled with impotent rage. His eyes were blood shot. His looks became sharp like arrows. He flared up. "Is

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this the honour given to arts and skills in the famous kingdom of Peddapuram?" he shouted in a shriek. He pulled out the bottle of the rose Attar. All the men around stupidly stared at him.

"I prepared this specially for the use of the great connoisseur, Sri Jagapati. I held him in respect. I regarded him on par with the Sultan of Delhi. I had to build it up drop by drop. I fancied that this Attar would give me the recognition I wished for in my life. Having come here all the way, I ruefully recognised that the Lord of Peddapuram is surrounded by ignoble men. The fragrance of a rose can be felt far away. But the existence of the thorns around it is felt only when one approaches it. I do not take this as a discourtesy to me personally, nor to my rose Attar. I have no way left to reach the great lord. But, I would not take this back with me. I would rather welcome death — extinction of my family which keenly pursues this profession. Let the fame of the Peddapuram king, so vilely corrupted by the intrigues of the Dewan, live long and exude fragrance purified by my rose Attar."

So saying, Khan held up his breath for a while and threw the bottle striking it against the wall of the fort.

The bottle broke into smithereens.

The gentry of the royal company gaped with blowing, thundering hearts.

A divine fragrance pervaded the air.

Men around felt intoxicated.

A few seconds passed. The audience regained senses and looked at Khan, who stood rooted to the ground as wood. They saw his fixed looks and turned back.

Sri Sri Sri Vatsavayi Chaturbhuja Timma Jagapati Maharaja sat on his steed with eyes closed in a bliss. The steed lifted its head high and was making an effort to breathe deeply.

People who visit the scene relate that the area smells like a rose even now.

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CHINUA ACHEBE

Progenitor of a Literary Tradition

V. SIVARAMAKRISHNAN

[The works of Chinua Achebe, the Nigerian litterateur, have been rated among the classics of African literature along with those of Senghor of Senegal and Wole Soyinka, another Nigerian (recipient of the Nobel Prize for literature, 1986). Here the author gives an insight into the writings of Achebe who deals with universal themes in a way which transcends the contemporary settings. — *Editor*]

Three statements of Chinua Achebe, the famous Nigerian author, made on different occasions and quoted by critics in support of their respective viewpoints provide the clue to Achebe's writings. The first is about the writer's role:

"The writer cannot expect to be excused from the task of re-education and re-generation that must now be done in Nigeria. In fact, the writer must walk right in front. For he is, after all, the sensitive point of his community." (1965)

The second one is about the impact of an alien culture on one's own:

"I am not one of those who would say that Africa has gained nothing at all during the colonial period .... But unfortunately when two cultures meet, one might expect, if we are angels, we could pick out the best in the other and retain the best in our own. But this doesn't often happen. What happens is that some of the worst elements of the old are retained and some of the worst of the new are added. So if it was for me to order society, I would be very unhappy at the way things have turned out...." (1967)

The third one is about his own culture:

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"We cannot pretend that our past was one long, technicolour idyll. We have to admit, like other people's pasts, ours had its good as well as its bad sides."

Clive Wake of the University of Kent, a perceptive critic, rates Chinua Achebe's works among the classics of African literature along with those of Senghor of Senegal and Wole Soyinka of Nigeria. While Achebe is primarily a novelist, Senghor is a poet and Soyinka is a dramatist. They all deal with universal themes of the human condition in a way which transcends the contemporary settings of their works.

Among African novelists, Achebe is *sui generis*. It is not as if he stands aloof from the main stream of 'protest' and cuts out a path for himself. He is very much in it — he protests against the imposition of an alien religion on the traditional way of life, against colonial rule and, after the independence of his country, against corruption in Government and society. It is in his handling of the English language to describe the moods and mores of a traditional society that he stands out. His 'noble rage' expresses itself in a language which is a blend of English in its conventional usage and the Ibo idiom. Far from detracting the flow of the narrative of making for clumsiness in structure, its effect is integral. An Ibo proverb, as Achebe uses it, besides giving a local colour, lights up a situation and invests it with a significance which would otherwise be missed.

Now in his later fifties, Achebe was born on November 16, 1930 at Ogidi in Nigeria. Educated at the University College Ibadan, from where he graduated with English, History and Religious Studies, he joined the Nigerian Broadcasting Service as Talks Producer in 1954. He rose to be the Director of External Broadcasting Services in charge of the Voice of Nigeria in 1961. Since then he has been at the Universities of Nigeria, Massachusetts and Connecticut. He is widely travelled and much honoured. He has received high praise for his editorship of the African Writers Series of Heinemann, with over 200 titles.

Achebe's reputation as an outstanding African novelist rests securely on his four novels — *Things Fall Apart* (1958), *No Longer At Ease* (1960), *Arrow of God* (1964) and *A Man of the People* (1966). The first and the third form a class by themselves in that they unfold the complexities of tribal life beneath its surface simplicity and calm; and the tribal societies symbolise the conflict of culture. The second and the fourth are satirical in intent and hold up a mirror against the New Rulers of the post-colonial era in Africa.

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As a critic has pointed out, the imaginative qualities evident in the first group are not seen at full play in the later novels of satire. They have a topical interest and, as no universal or eternal principles are involved, they have a limited literary value. But Achebe's narrative gifts, his keenness of observation, his wit and humour are all there to please the general reader and strike a sensitive chord in the serious one.

II

"Things Fall Apart" is the tragic story of the decline and fall of the tribal hero, Okonkwo of Umuofia, 'known throughout the nine villages and even beyond' for his valour Son of a lazy, improvident father, Okonkwo acquired fame and fortune by his feats of physical strength and tireless efforts on the field. But his whole life was dominated by fear, the fear of failure and of weakness "It was deeper and more intimate than the fear of evil and capricious gods and of magic, the fear of the forest, and the forces of nature malevolent red in tooth and claw. Okonkwo's fear was greater than these. It was not external but lay deep within himself. It was the fear of himself, lest he should be found to resemble his father .... And so Okonkwo was ruled by one passion — to hate everything that his father Unoke had loved. One of those things was gentleness and another was idleness." And the fatal flaw in the hero was this fear of himself of failure.

As it happened, Okonkwo finds himself in the centre of three disturbing episodes in the even tenor of tribal life. The first occurs during the Week of Peace, before the planting season, when no work is done and no physical injury is caused to anyone. Okonkwo, provoked to 'justifiable' anger by his youngest wife who, having gone to a friend's house to plait her hair, delays his meal, in a fit of temper, and beats her in violation of the time-honoured tradition of observing the Week of Peace.

Though he feels repentant later and is made to appease the Goddess of the Earth, the incident is a portent. The priest tells him: "The evil you have done can ruin the whole clan. The Earth Goddess whom you have insulted may refuse to give us her increase, and we shall perish." (How reminiscent of Thakazhi's 'Chemmeen' in which the Goddess of the Sea is provoked by the profanity of Pareekutti and Karuthamma.)

Then follows the second episode in which Okonkwo kills Ikemefuna, brought to Okonkwo's village as a reparation for woman slaughter from a neighbouring village, but brought up

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as his own son. The killing was not Okonkwo's fault as it was done in obedience to the pronouncement of the Oracle of the Hills and the Caves. But Okonkwo kills the boy for fear of being called a coward though a village elder had warned him: "The boy calls you father. Do not bear a hand in his death."

The third episode drives him into exile for seven years. Ezedu, 'a great man and a noble warrior' of the clan is dead, and is being given a fitting funeral, with drums beating, guns booming and people dancing. A one-handed spirit (mask) calls forth: "Ezedu! If you had been poor in your last life, I would have asked you to be rich when you come again. But you were rich. If you had been a coward, I would have asked you to bring courage. But you were a fearless warrior. If you had died young, I would have asked to get life. But you lived long. So I shall ask you to come again the way you came before. If your death was the death of nature, go in peace. But if a man caused it, do not allow him a moment's rest." (The passage quoted highlights some of the values cherished by Ibo society — they are typically Indian.)

When the festivities rise to a crescendo, Okonkwo's gun explodes unexpectedly and kills the sixteen-year-old son of the dead man whose burial the crowd attended. The punishment for manslaughter, not deliberate, but due to inadvertence, is exile from the village for seven years. And Okonkwo bows to the will of the society and goes away with his three wives and eleven children to his mother's village of Mbanta.

Okonkwo is very unhappy, bowed with grief, but is reminded by the village elder: "Motherland protects. Mother is supreme." (Mother and Motherland are superior to Paradise, according to an Indian saying.)

In the new village of his forced exile, Okonkwo applies himself diligently to land and prospers—and adds two more wives. But something within him has snapped and he longs for his return to Umuofia. But tidings from his village are disturbing. The missionaries had arrived and had started making converts. One of the seven villages, Abame, was wiped out by military action as the people had killed a Whiteman and taken possession of his 'iron horse'. But here again there was a violation of a traditional injunction: "Never kill a man who says nothing .... There is something ominous behind the silence.' (Achebe gives a story to support this.)

Christian missionaries arrive in Mbanta also and build a church on a piece of land reserved for burying all those who

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died of 'evil diseases like leprosy and small-pox and dumping potent fetishes of great medicinemen when they died." Okonkwo, the tribal hero, is restless but the men of Mbanta counsel caution: 'When a man blasphemes, what do we do? Do we go and stop his mouth? No, we put our fingers into our ears to stop us from hearing. That is a wise action."

"Let us not reason like cowards," said Okonkwo. "If a man comes into my hut and defecates on the floor, what do I do? Do I shut my eyes? No! I take a stick and break his head." Okonkwo thought that the Mbanta clan was a womanly clan; such a thing would never happen in his fatherland, Umuofia!

Okonkwo suffers the greatest humiliation when his son joins the missionaries, deserting his home. His father's killing of Ikemefuna, to whom he was greatly attached, in deference to the wishes of the Oracle of the Hills and the Caves, had never gone out of his mind. "Okonkwo saw himself and his fathers crowding round their ancestral shrine waiting in vain for worship and sacrifice and finding nothing but ashes of bygone days and his children all the while praying to the Whiteman's God."

Okonkwo returns to his village at the end of seven years but, in the changed situation, his return is not as memorable as he had wished. The clan had undergone such a profound change during his exile that it was barely recognisable.

Events move swiftly. The people of Umuofia raze to the ground the newly-built church when one of the converts unmasks a spirit during the annual worship of the Earth Goddess. This is followed by the arrest and detention of the village elders including Okonkwo by the colonial rulers. They are released, after torture, on payment of a fine. A meeting is called to decide on the action to be taken to avenge the humiliation. Okonkwo comes to his own decision: "If Umuofia decided on war, all would be well. But if they chose to be cowards, he would go out and avenge himself."

The meeting breaks up abruptly when five court messengers want the meeting to stop. Okonkwo cuts off the head of the leader of the messengers and his clan breaks into tumult instead of action. The District Commissioner arrives to arrest Okonkwo only to find him hanging from a tree behind his house. His close friend mourns: "That man was one of the greatest men in Umuofia. You drove him to kill himself; and now he will be buried like a dog." (Traditional custom forbade touching the body and giving it a normal burial when a person committed suicide.) As irony would have it, the minions of the court take down the body and the Commissioner gets new material for his

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book : "The Pacification of the Primitive Tribes of the Lower Niger."

This summary version of the story does scant justice to Achebe's fascinating technique of narration. Dialogues peppered with proverbs and tales pointing to a moral add spice to the narrative.

Achebe poses the conflict between traditional religion and the new religion of the Christian missionaries and lets the reader draw his own conclusion. He invests the story with literary value by his authentic delineation of the tragic hero of the tribal society, Okonkwo.

The title of the novel is taken from W. B. Yeats' "The Second Coming":

Things fall apart: the centre cannot hold!
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world.

As Okonkwo explains, 'the Whiteman has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart'—the binding forces of their gods, beliefs, customs, festivities, were all gone.

III

"Arrow of God" is the *magnum opus* of Achebe. Here is the story of a tribal priest standing his ground in the teeth of opposition to his ways of thinking and doing, seeing himself as the 'arrow from the bow of God.'

Ezeulu, 'the magnificent man' as Achebe calls him, is the chief priest of Ulu, the deity protecting six villages constituting Umuaro. He is introduced to us as one conscious of his strength and power as the chief priest. "Whenever Ezeulu considered the immensity of his power over the year and the crops and, therefore, over the people he wondered if it was real. It was true he named the day for the Feast of Pumpkin Leaves (before the planting season) and the New Yam Feast (before the harvest); but he did not choose it. He was merely a watchman. His power was no more than the power of a child over a goat that was said to be his. As long as the goat was alive it could be his; he would find it food and take care of it. But the day it was slaughtered he would know soon enough who the real owner was—No! the Chief Priest of Ulu was more than that, must be more than that. If he should refuse to name the day there would be no festival—no planting and no reaping. But could he refuse? No Chief Priest had ever refused. So it could not be done. He would not dare."

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Ezeulu was stung to anger by this as though his enemy had spoken it.

"Take away that word, dare," he replied to his enemy. "Yes, I say, take away. No man in all Umuaro can stand up and say that I dare not. The woman who will bear the man say it has not been born yet."

It is precisely this pride, this stubbornness, that leads him towards the close of the novel, to stand firm in his decision to postpone the New Yam Festival — and thereby driving his clansmen into the arms of the Christian missionary. He ends up a demented man and the people see in his fate the upholding of the wisdom of their ancestors — that no man, however great, was greater than his people; that no one ever won judgement against his clan."

Achebe unfolds the story of the fall of Ezeulu through a series of episodes — the Festival of Pumpkin Leaves, the 'war' with the neighbouring village of Okperi over a piece of land against his advice, the sacrilege committed by his son in putting the Royal Python inside a box, the offer of Paramount Chieftaincy to Exeulu and his refusal to accept it ('Tell the Whiteman that Ezeulu will not be anybody's chief, except Ulu') and the tragic finale of his madness caused by the death of his first son. ('Why, he asked himself again and again, why had Ulu chosen to deal thus with him, to strike him down and then cover him with mud?')

Ezeulu, headstrong though he was, was also a man of truth; his voice was also the voice of sanity; his counsel, always one of sobriety and moderation. He made enemies, as men of his type always do, including his own son. But he shines through it all 'a magnificent man'.

Ezeulu's character can best be brought out in his own words.

To his son whom he sends to the Christian Mission School in the face of opposition from everyone close to him he says:

"I want one of my sons to join these people (missionaries) and be my eye there. If there is nothing in it, you will come back. But if there is something there, you will bring home my share. The world is a Mask dancing. If you want to see it well, you do not see it in one place. My spirit tells me that those who do not befriend the Whiteman will be saying *had we known* tomorrow."

About the belief that the sound of a gun would scare away the spirit afflicting a sick man:

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"This gun-shooting is no more than a foolish groping about. How can we frighten spirits away with the noise of a gun! If it were so easy any man who had enough money to buy a keg of gunpowder would live and live until mushrooms sprouted from his head."

About the rivalry of a minor priest of another God:

"No. it is not jealousy but foolishness: the kind that puts its head into the pot. But if it is jealousy, let him go on. The fly that perches on a mound of dung may strut around as it likes, it cannot move the mound."

To his friend:

"I can see things where other men are blind. That is why I am known and at the same time I am unknown. You are my friend and you know whether I am a thief or a murderer or an honest man. But you cannot know the thing which beats the drum to which Ezeulu dances."

There is a minor role in the story for Capt. T. K. Winterbottom, the cynical but shrewd District Commissioner who is not unlike the *Vidushaka* in Sanskrit drama. We also get to know the queer and quaint customs of the tribal society such as the breaking of kolanuts when friends meet or a guest arrives, marriage rites, the Pumpkin Leaves Festival and the dance of the Masks on the occasion, etc. Ezeulu personifies the Lord's injunction in the Gita: "Be you only an instrument, Arjuna." (*Bhagavad Gita* Ch. XI—33).

IV

"No Longer At Ease' is the story of an educated young man putting up a brave fight against corruption and succumbing to the temptation under the pressure of circumstance but not before losing the peace of his soul. Obiajulu Okonkwo (Obi for short), sent to England by his tribesmen of Umuofia for further studies, returns to Nigeria, self-willed, sceptical, determined not to countenance corruption and in love with a girl whom he had first met in London and later on board the cargo boat that brought him back to his country. As a student of English literature, he wrote poems on his visions for the future of his country.

God bless our noble countrymen
And women everywhere.
Teach them to walk in unity
To build our nation dear;
Forgetting region, tribe or speech,
But caring always each for each.

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But even when he disembarks, he encounters corruption in the form of a customs official. He gets a senior civil servant's post and sets his face sternly against attempts at bribing him. Soon he is up against the opposition of his parents and his clansmen to his marriage with the girl (Clara) he loves because she was born an Osu — "one whose great-great-great grandfather had been dedicated to serve a God, thereby setting himself apart and turning his descendents into a forbidden caste to the end of time" His own father, a catechist for 25 years and one who had preached against heathen customs, is against the marriage because:

"Osu is like leprosy in the minds of our people. I beg of you, my son, not to bring the mark of shame and of leprosy into your family. If you do, your children and your children's children into the third and fourth generations will curse your memory. It is not for myself I speak; my days are few. You will bring sorrow on your head and the heads of your children. Who will marry your daughters? Whose daughters will your sons marry? Think of that, my son. We are Christians but we cannot marry our own daughters."

Obi is unable to understand the logic. What made an Osu different from other men and women? Nothing but ignorance of their forefathers. Why should they, who had seen the light of the Gospel, remain in that ignorance?"

If Obi faced a wall of 'ignorance' in his personal affairs he was constantly under pressure, as the Secretary of the Scholarship Commission, to favour this or that candidate, some of them girls, for money or worse. He stood his ground so long as he could but, when he found himself in sore financial straits — repayment dues to his community, Clara's abortion expenses, income tax arrears, car insurance, etc. — he threw idealism to the winds. His mother's death came on top of it all — a great shock to him but as the days passed, he began feeling like a "brand new snake just emerged from its slough." Many thoughts assailed him. "Beyond death there are no ideals and humbug, only reality." The impatient idealist says, "Give me a place to stand and I shall move the earth." But such a place does not exist. We all have to stand on the earth itself and go with her at her pace. The most horrible sight in the world cannot put out the eye."

Though a defeated idealist, Obi did see the error of his ways and almost shrank from those who offered bribes. But it was too late. For a paltry twenty pounds, which he did not even touch, he was arrested, tried and convicted. Everyone was surprised including the judge who said: "I cannot comprehend how

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a young man of your education and brilliant promise could have done this." " Treacherous tears came to Obi's eyes. He brought out a white handkerchief and rubbed his face. But he did it as people do when they wipe sweat. He even tried to smile and belie the tears. A smile would have been quite logical. All that stuff about education and promise and betrayal had not taken him unawares. He had expected it and rehearsed this very scene a hundred times until it had become as familiar as a friend."

His name was Obiajulu — which meant " the mind at last is at rest ". His birth, of course, brought peace of mind to his father as Obi was the first son after four daughters. But Obi's own life and experience gave the lie to the name. His life turned out to be a restless one, " no longer at ease ".

" No Longer At Ease ! " is more a short story stretched out to some length. It brings to focus an officialdom with an itching palm for which the people had a large share of responsibility.

Humour, wit, innuendo and satire are all part of the Achebe armoury. There is no place for romance in his writings — which is indeed one of Ngugi's strong points. His genius is native racy of the soil.

THE END OF ALL ENDS

MANINDRANATH SAMADDAR

At the end of all pains I see a bloom ;
The bud stares at its own transformation,
A joyous birth, a new incarnation.
" I' ll give honey and fragrance, and my doom
Is not to sigh—and not to die so soon "
It frowns hard at my wrong calculation
And goes on : " Look afresh at all creation ".
So, I begin anew to sing my tune.

I see in things now I haven't before seen,
Death of all old hides the life of the new ;
The world is never dry—but evergreen ;
Night ends and the sky brightens with red hue;
Mother Nature, with red-rose in hand, leans
On us. Let, then, all ends find the end true.

— Translated from Bengali by Samar Ghosh.

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Dr. D. V. GUNDAPPA
His life and Achievements

Prof. L. S. SESHAGIRI RAO

[The Birth Centenary of Dr. D. V. Gundappa, eminent litterateur, savant, a polyglot, a great patriot, a prominent social worker and founder of the Gokhale Institute of Public Affairs, was celebrated under the joint auspices of the Sahitya Akademi, Delhi and the Government of Karnataka, at Bangalore on August 29, 1987. It was inaugurated by Shri Ramakrishna Hegde, Chief Minister of Karnataka. A seminar was organised on the 30th and 31st when eminent men of letters read papers on different aspects of D. V. G. The following paper read at the seminar is reproduced with the kind courtesy of the Sahitya Akademi. *Editor*]

Men of letters are of two types. There are those who fulfil themselves solely or mainly in creative writing. There are others whose literary works are just some of the rays radiating from a central flame. These are essentially men who are involved in the process of purposeful living, men of endeavour and action, and their writing is a form of action. They are bigger, very much bigger, than the sum total of their writings. They are architects shaping their lives, and writing is a means to an end. The great man to whose memory we are paying a tribute today belongs to this category. Poet, critic, biographer and master of prose, the President of the Eighteenth Kannada Literary Conference, DVG was also a member of the Mysore Legislative Council, a member of the Mysore Political Reforms' Committee, the first President of the Mysore State Journalists' Association, and the President of the First All Karnataka Journalists' Conference. When Sir M. Visveshvariah was elected President of the South India People's Conference in 1929, he insisted that DVG should be his secretary, not because he was an eminent man of letters but because he was a knowledgeable writer on political issues, a man of unimpeachable integrity, a man who could think clearly and express

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himself with precision and without rhetoric, and a man who could work in a team. This translator of Shakespeare and Omar Khayyam was also the author of "The State and Their People in the Indian Constitution" and "The Case of the People of the Indian States." He gave the Kannada readers a unique poem: "Mankuthimmana Kagga"; he gave the people of Karnataka a unique institution; The Gokhale Institute of Public Affairs.

"To make the world a better place to live in" — the expression has become a cliche. But to DVG this was the sole justification of life. He once made a startling statement: "All that I have done these sixty years is to be a journalist. All that I have written, be it on politics or philosophy, be it literature or music, be it in prose or verse, all that I have done, be it in the Legislative Council or elsewhere in public life, is just journalism in one form or another." But what was journalism to him? He conceived its mission loftily: "As the policeman keeps awake the whole night in order that citizens might sleep in peace, as the soldier stands firm on the battlefield that his countrymen might live in security, the journalist has to shed all thought of comfort and has to toil so that all people may live happily." He was a creative writer, but also a responsible citizen and a sentinel.

Dr. Gundappa was born in Mulubagal, some sixty miles from Bangalore, in Kolar District. He came from an orthodox family, not too fortunate in wordly matters. He could not pass the Secondary School Leaving Examination. Married at the age of 16 or 17, he tried his hand at a number of professions — as a teacher, a company agent, a vendor of stamp papers and so on. For a time he found refuge as a clerk in a factory for painting jutkas, that is, carriages drawn by horses. The salary was ten rupees a month. But even this haven he lost after four months. But fortunately, his work here had brought him into contact with journalism, and he now became a journalist.

I do not propose to narrate in detail the story of his life, although the temptation is strong. After a brief spell in Madras he settled in Bangalore. His articles brought him to the notice of Sir M. Visveshvariah, then the Dewan or Chief Minister of Mysore State. DVG's forthright views expressed in his own English bi-weekly, the "Karnataka", displeased even his friend, Sir M. V. DVG grew interested in the country's affairs. His writings drew the attention of men like the Rt. Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastry, and he became more and more involved in public life and discussions. He began with an admiration for British rule but soon grew disillusioned. He was a disciple of Gopalakrishna Gokhale who epitomized for him the ideal citizen — a man of

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Integrity, of independent thought and sober action. He was like his master, a Liberal. He believed in equipping himself for any task he undertook. The Government nominated him to the Bangalore Municipality and then to the State Legislative Council; he was also a member of the Mysore University Senate and its Council — this man who had never stepped into a college as a student. Later the university honoured itself by conferring the D. Litt. degree on him. In 1969 he received the Sahitya Akademi Award for his *Srimadbhagavadgeetatatparya athave Jeevanadharmayoga*. Incidentally, his son, Dr. B. G. L. Swamy, received the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1978, for his *Hasuru Honnu*.

As the passing years made the inevitability of the dawn of independence clear, DVG felt that the youth of the country should be trained for the responsibilities of freedom. The struggle for freedom demanded heroism, freedom itself demanded wisdom. With the young men who clustered around him he discussed the problems of a free India. He stressed responsible citizenship. Once, when I was with him, a bunch of young men came to complain that water supply to their locality was irregular and inadequate. They wished to complain to the authorities. He said, "Have you ascertained how much water other parts of the city are getting? If an officer asks you how many houses there are on a particular road in your locality and how many street taps there are, can you answer him?" It was this man who founded the Gokhale Institute. And its work filled quite a considerable part of his life thereafter.

DVG's work brought him into contact with eminent men like Sri V. S. Srinivasa Sastry, P. S. Shivaswamy Iyer and T. R. Venkatarama Sastry, and powerful Dewans of Mysore State like Sir MV and Sir Mirza Ismail. He won their friendship and regard. But he was never affluent. Yet he declined all offers of Government employment. He often assisted Sir M V; and Visvesvaraiah was not a man to accept free service. He sent cheques; DVG protested. Sir MV insisted; so DVG accepted the cheques—but never encashed them. Indeed, it was not in his nature to encash any service he had rendered From those who knew him intimately, we have it on record that for years his wife would not visit neighbours because she did not have a decent saree to wear. Some of the letters which passed between DVG and his son BGL Swamy have been recently published. They show both how DVG was in financial straits and how he struggled not to be a burden to his son. In one letter he writes: "You know the maintenance of this Chatram called our family depends on your cheque. In all seriousness I would ask you to look on this monthly expenditure of yours as an act of Dharma....It

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is no pleasure to be such a drain on your funds. I have been thinking of a way of managing without being a burden upon you. I must soon find a way but how soon I shall succeed I cannot say. I await the mercy of God." And yet, when his fellow-citizens presented him with a purse of a lakh of rupees he made over the entire amount to the Gokhale Institute. Even the five thousand rupees he got with the Sahitya Akademi Award went to the Institute.

DVG was probably never totally free from financial worry but yet he was always a cordial host and a genial man. In later years he became an institution and a savant, and had visitors from all walks of life. Men of letters, sometimes from other parts of the country, Sanskrit scholars of repute and teenagers from colleges, a batch of young men and women from Gujarat or from Germany, journalists from Mysore or Madhya Pradesh—he never knew who might call on him. The interpretation of a verse from the Rig Veda or from Shakespeare, the ethics of journalism or the propriety of the utterance of a leader, the beauty of a couplet in Kalidasa or of a song composed by Vasudevacharya, values in education or a delicay which was popular fifty years ago—you might find any subject under the sun being discussed in his room when you walked in. And the most serious discussion of the most abstruse subject would be punctuated with loud laughter, often provoked by the old man's own comments He could laugh at others, and he could laugh at himself.

The man made one feel younger. Even at eighty-five he remained young, and his enthusiasm was infectious. He was not a revolutionary; his speeches were not thrilling; but one felt one was in the presence, not of a rich man, but of a rich personality. His words came from a mind irrigated by the twin streams of knowledge and experience. And he was rich in the friendships he had acquired and the respect and affection he commanded. The lad who had been unable to pass the SSLC Examination, had come a long way. And whatever he had, he earned by hard work. To give a simple instance, there was his English. I often wondered at his command of English. Even in conversation he chose the right words and used them with such precision. He had mastered a foreign language by sheer effort. He had the hall-mark of the true scholar — the devotion to precision. I think his philosophy can be summed up in two statements he himself made. Once, someone said to him, "All the world praises Mr so-and-so; just go to his house now and see what's going on." DVG's answer was, "Why should I take upon myself God's work? It's for God to judge. Let each man find comfort where he will, it is not for me to judge." And, speaking about a certain Dr Achyuta Rao

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he says, "He believed that God had made honey and given man lips, in order that man might bring honey and lips together."

Apart from making life a continuous process of enrichment what did DVG achieve?

There is, of course, the Gokhale Institute, a visible symbol of his sense of civic responsibility, and a tribute to one man's vision. He was averse to all recognition. When a periodical published a laudatory article on him, he wrote, "Such praise of a living man is ill-advised." As long as he was alive he would not permit the City Corporation to name the road where he lived, after him. And yet he agreed to a public felicitation. I think the only reason was that it would bring a purse of a lakh of rupees which he could donate to the Institute. Today it has a library of more than 80,000 volumes, and these include some rare classics. It is one of the centres of cultural activities in Bangalore.

It is not for me to assess DVG's work as a legislator or his political thought. But I must mention his contribution to Kannada through the Kannada Sahitya Parishat. The Yuvaraja was the President but the Vice-President was really in charge of the institution. Those were days when the Parishat had but meagre funds and yet, as Vice-President, DVG added new dimensions to its work. I wish to mention just two schemes. In a country where the overwhelming majority were illiterate, he saw the "gamaki" a man who could render poetry effectively, as a link between the poet and the reader. He started training classes in gamaka; the gamakis were trained to render not only the classics but modern poems. Secondly he organized the Vasantha Sahityotsava in a highly imaginative way. He realized that, sooner or later, the language of the people had to be the language of instruction. He invited professors of the university to speak in Kannada on the subjects of their specialization and got teachers from all over the state to attend. Sceptical professors and diffident professors were soon looking for technical equivalents in Kannada.

DVG is one of the Navodaya, that is, Renaissance, writers. These writers formed the bridge between the literature of the pre-Modern Age and the literature of the Modern Age. From the west, ideas, books and challenges came flooding the mind. These writers had, like Ishwara arresting the devastating onrush of Ganga, to arrest this flood and to ensure that they and their generation were not swept off their feet. They were steeped in classical Sanskrit and Kannada in literatures, and Indian philosophy. It is to the credit of this generation that it absorbed

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the shock and shaped a new and forward-looking literature without sacrificing into inheritance. DVG belonged to this generation.

So far as I know, the first serious discussion of the nature and role of literature, in the Navodaya Age, was in a talk given by DVG in September 1920. The talk was subsequently published with the title, "Sahitya mathu Janajeevana". The first observation he makes is this: most Kannada poets sustained themselves in borrowings from Sanskrit; contemporary poets have little knowledge of the world they live in. Therefore, says DVG, if a man should say, "If I do not know Sanskrit I lose something; if I do not know English, I lose something. But what do I lose if I do not know Kannada, we have no answer." DVG insists on the contemporary relevance of literature, and on the close relationship between the literature of an age and the social environment in which it takes shape. To quote him, "Where the life of the people moves vigorously towards many goals, purposeful and meaningful writing will appear. But where the life of the people is bereft of heroism and magnanimity, where the people are immersed in mere sordid toil, great poetry cannot be born." And of the language he says, "This is a lesson Kannadigas will do well to remember; the more precise our understanding of our political and economic duties the more earnest the implementation of them, the better and stronger our language becomes." Even more interestingly, he asserts that the same inspiration shaped the founding of the Indian National Congress, the vision of Sir M V which led to the construction of the Krishnaraja Sagara Dam, the research of Sir Jagadishachandra Bose, and the poetry of Rabindranatha Tagore... The process of the nativization of Western poetics is at work here. The mind moves freely from Anandavardhana to Gilbert Murray, and examples are drawn from Kalidasa and Shakespeare. DVG quotes the Sanskrit verse "Niyamakriti niyatirahitam", etc., and immediately adds, "This is the view of Western writers on poetics, too." Referring to the Renaissance Age of daring acts and adventurous thought, the age from which a Shakespeare emerged, DVG reflects, "Such must have been the age of Vyasa also". Speaking of creative writing he observes, "If poetry is to be sweet to the lips and the ears of the reader, its language must be graceful; if it is to appeal to their intellect it must have weight of content. If this is to be achieved poetry needs the discipline of the Indian poet and the unfettered thought of the English poet"... Behind his exposition of the power of poetry are the well-known Indian concept of "kanthasammithi" and Shelley's assertion that the imagination is at the root of all morality.

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Since separate papers are being presented on the creative and critical writings of DVG, I shall not be so presumptuous as to attempt a detailed study of either. But for the sake of completeness I shall take the liberty of offering some observations. DVG's reaction to the Western influence as a creative writer is also one of rewarding assimilation. The biography was one of the forms which came to Kannada at the time of its Renaissance. DVG has given us some excellent biographies. A study of an early collection of his poems, like "Nivedana", published in 1924, is interesting. The lyric came to Kannada from English literature (except for the devotional outpourings of the Vachanakaras and the Haridasas). The pioneers were faced with the task of finding the right metres and diction for the new form and spirit. Here is a young poet, flexing his literary muscles, as it were. The metres he chooses are indigenous metres, like the "seesa", the "kanda" and the "shatpadi"; but the spirit is modern. I would particularly refer to the poem, "Belurina Shila Balikeyaru". It is an ode addressed to the lovely nymphs who adorn the brackets in the Channakeshava Temple in Belur. The stanzas are regular in the sense that the metres are clearly defined and recognized, like the "kanda" and the "vritta"; but all the stanzas do not employ the same metre. Though the metres are native Kannada metres the total form, the ode itself, is the gift of English poetry. The poem is reminiscent of Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn". It contains the Kannada rendering of a line from Keats's ode, "Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard are sweeter"; it glances at the famous words, "Beauty is Truth, Truth is Beauty". But more important than these technical experimentation and Keatsian influence is the spirit of the poem. The temple is conceived as the mansion of the bewitching beauties in love with the Vishwashilpi, proclaiming the "mantra" of "sarasa jeevana" or a life of aesthetic joy God is neither Power nor Justice nor even Mercy here; he is the Supreme Lover, the Fountain of joy. It is a distinctly individual response to life, not didactic but moral in the best sense, in the sense that it recognizes the enrichment of life as the highest worship.

The word often used to describe DVG is "dheemantha." The epithet finds full justification in a poem like "Mankuthimmana Kagga." It has proved to be one of the most popular poems in the language, and in the course of forty-four years has seen eight editions. The poem has a frame; also, the opening verses capture the vision of a vast universe in which millions of lives are engaged in a frenzied dance, a universe of awesome clashes and invasions, a universe of balls of fire and of terrifying abysses. The questions are asked: What is the goal

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of man, inhabiting such a universe? What is his worth? His end? What is the meaning of it all? It seems to me that the rest of the poem is to be read in this context — of a sentient and intelligent being in an immense universe in which inscrutable forces are at work. In every section the speaker-viewer shifts his point of view, but informing the entire poem is a central vision of the meaningfulness of life, even when viewed in the frame of the vastness of the universe and the immensity of Time. Again and again the reader feels as if a button has been pressed and a light flashes forth. The best parts of the poem achieve a balance of thought and feeling, a balance, to use a cliche, of the head and the heart.

A few words about another important work, and I have done. This is the eight-volume "Jnapaka Chitrashale." This was the work of his later years. In fact, the last volume was a posthumous publication. The work can be viewed from several angles — as reminisences, as cultural history, as a gallery of portraits, as sparkling and thoughtful prose. Here is an elderly man of letters, his mind steeped in Indian thought and literature, writing with a sheer delight in the wealth and variety of human nature which reminds one of the Shakespeare of the comedies, of Ben Jonson, of Goldsmith and Jane Austen and Dickens and Bernard Shaw. The vitality, the enduring strength of a people manifests here in a hundred forms, in people of all castes and social levels DVG is aware of how much of injustice, cruelty and stupidity there is in life; but his eyes are fixed on the goodness and culture of people. Charity and magnanimity characterize the re-creation of this teeming world. And at the end of it all, he helps us retain our faith in and respect for man. It is a vision of ripeness which makes life worth living, of inner strength which makes life bearable; it is a brave vision for which one is grateful to DVG.

Certain aspects of DVG's writings may strike a later-day reader as limitations. Thus, in his recorded response to life it seems to me that he does not reckon with Evil. Not that he was unaware of its presence or its power. But, in his vision of the flowering of the spirit the withering power of Evil does not receive the attention it ought to. In fact, it seems to me that this is the limitation of most of the writers of his generation. Secondly, the vision focuses on the ripeness of the individual spirit; but the society it takes for granted is a static society and, it seems to me, the problem of social change is scarcely recognized.

But despite these limitations, DVG's legacy is a great legacy; we may repeat what Dryden said of Chaucer. "Here is God's plenty."

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VAPORISED

Dr. IFTIKHAR HUSAIN RIZVI

Dressed in transparent white
She slipped in on tip-toes.
Her rosy grandeur oozed from every curve;
The same freshness and fawny innocence
And dazzling brow amazed the poet.
She waited for him to break the ice;
He was too charmed to speak.
....
They looked a painter's dream
Far on the canvas of the sky.
A thousand moments passed away unseen
In ripples of enchanted thrills.
She came to herself with a start
And then in great urgency said:
"Enwrap me in your arms and swallow me,
The dead-line is ten short minutes;
I can't stay for more,
I am in the shroud of a curse."
His heart writhed as he got up anon;
Before he could lose himself in her,
Appeared a demon from nowhere
And vanished with her in a flash.

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THE PLAYS OF ARTHUR MILLER

A Major Theme : Unrelatedness and Alienation

Prof. S. C. MATHUR

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Arthur Miller has tried to diagnose and locate the maladies afflicting the modern man in his plays. The theme of unrelatedness and alienation is the most important and crucial one for the playwright. It is the most pervasive theme in the plays of Arthur Miller as has been rightly pointed out by Benjamin Nelson. He says, " Like Monte Sant Angelo all of Miller's writing is invisibly prefaced by the words E. M. Forster inscribed in his novel, *Howard's End*, 'only connect'. It is precisely this lack of connection, followed by the realization of its importance, and the ultimate commitment to its achievement which forms the underlying thematic pattern of Miller's plays ".[1]

The problem of unrelatedness is a recurrent theme in the plays of Miller. He attacks and lays siege on " the fortress of unrelatedness ".[2] That man is not only related to the immediate members of his family but has got a wider responsibility to the outside world is a theme that constantly recurs in his plays. All great and serious plays, according to him, are ultimately involved with the basic problem, " How may a man make of the outside world a home " ?[3]

The problem of unrelatedness is a major theme in the plays of Miller. In his first major play, *All My Sons*, Joe Keller's myopic vision does not allow him to look beyond the four walls of his home and immediate family. He is unable to comprehend the fact that there is a world beyond his immediate neighbourhood to which he is also responsible. He fails to be the good man, the good citizen that his son, Chris, demands. His fault, according to Miller and Chris, is that he does not recognize any allegiance

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to society at large. The fact that a man belongs not only to himself and his family but to the world beyond it is not intelligible to him. In the words of Benjamin Nelson, " Keller's crime is the consequence of the pervasive illness of unrelatedness. It is this bland but lethal disease that is so frightening for Miller because it plunges into jungle anarchy all civilization's attempts at order and meaning. And it is against this barrier of unrelatedness that Chris Keller hurls himself ".[4]

Willy Loman in *Death of a Salesman* like Joe Keller in *All My Sons* is completely oblivious of the needs of the society and is primarily interested in the welfare of his own immediate family members — his sons, Happy and Biff. John Proctor, in the play *The Crucible*, stands as a symbol of those who went to the scaffold cheerfully because they were more concerned about securing the approval and recognition of their actions by other members of the community and did not want their fair names to be sullied. Eddie Carbone, in the play *A View from the Bridge*, shows the same concern and wants to get back his fair name and respect in the eyes of his community. The play *A Memory of two Mondays*, portrays very poignantly the dull routine, the warping of the soul and the crushing conformity that it produces. In this play Miller has revealed that depersonalization and alienation are at the core of the sickness of modern man. The play *After the Fall*, deals with the theme of separateness, breaking of faith and betrayal. In the words of Quentin, the protagonist of the play, " Everything is one thing you see. I do not know what are we to one another ".[5] Quentin is shocked at the realization that in this world people can be so easily disposed off. The idea of separateness bewilders Quentin as one character after another tries to become a separate person in the play — Loolse, Mickey and Mother. As soon as we find that our interests are not identical with someone, we start behaving like a separate person, forgetting completely even our long association and friendship with him. Quentin, on seeing the betrayals, becomes disgusted and disillusioned and finally tells Maggie, a character in the play. " We are all separate people. I tried not to be but finally one is — a separate person ".[6] The fact that we have become completely indifferent to the needs of others and have lost the human touch has been shown in the play *Incident at Vichy*, as the Major, a character in the play, says : " There are no persons any more, don't you see that. There will never be persons again ".[7] In Arthur Miller's play *The Price*, Walter becomes as a separate person and deserts his old father to pursue his own medical career. The father also acts as a separate person in the play when he does not help Victor, his son, with his money at a time he needed

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it the most. Thus, we find that the theme of unrelatedness, separateness and alienation is a recurring theme in the plays of Arthur Miller.

Perhaps the most disturbing experience of modern man has been the pervasive sense of alienation. Modern man finds himself cut off from his roots, alienated and lost, in an atmosphere of moral and cultural decay that surrounds him on all sides. The vision of modern man is essentially that of a lonely figure, cut off from his immediate social and cultural milieu. In the modern world people live in a closed, alien world of encapsulating rooms, walls and windows suggesting imprisonment of their self and separation from other human beings. And it is this acute sense of disconnectedness that accumulates their awareness of loneliness and self-alienation. We are a daily witness to the social and spiritual alienation of the individuals who, though they remain in physical proximity, find it impossible to communicate with one another as people in the modern world have developed an attitude of indifference and callousness. Modern life is not integrated by any social purpose or moral value. On the other hand, we find man controlled and regulated by his physical needs and selfish motives. Arthur Miller has tried to show in his plays that no man can lead a life of isolation completely cut off from the rest of the society.

The fact that modern man finds himself completely alone and totally cut off from the society has led to the frantic quest for community. Arthur Miller has tried in his plays to find an answer to the question as to "how in the modern world is it possible to recapture the primary group values of affection, compassion, solidarity and responsibility"?[8] All these values—binding man to man—are hardly to be seen in the present day world. The lack of personal relationship means social distance, lack of social cohesiveness and lack of responsibility for one another. In most of the cases, it is the ineffectuality of their love and affection that identifies their feeling of alientation, loneliness and apartness from others. For the loss of man's capacity to love is by far the greatest loss in modern times. An icy coldness devoid of all warmth has developed in our love relationship. In modern life we find that love, the loveliest of all emotions, often ends in betrayal. The failure and futility of love in the modern world has resulted in making man all the more lonely and lost. Love has lost its human significance and spiritual overtones. Men and women already conscious of their separation from one another get more separated instead of attaining any sense of oneness and emotional integrity. Quentin's unsuccessful marriages in *After the Fall* are an eloquent testimony of this separatenes

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Thus, we can conclude that throughout his long dramatic career Arthur Miller, the great American playwright, was pre-occupied with the problem of human relatedness and solidarity—the question of making the outside world his home.

Notes

1. Benjamin Nelson, *Arthur Miller : Portrait of a Playwright* (London : Peter Owen, 1970), p. 315.

2. Arthur Miller, *Collected Plays* with an Introduction (New York. The Viking Press, 1957), p. 19.

3. Arthur Miller, "The Family in Modern Drama" *Atlantic Monthly*, 197, No. 4 (April 1956), p. 36.

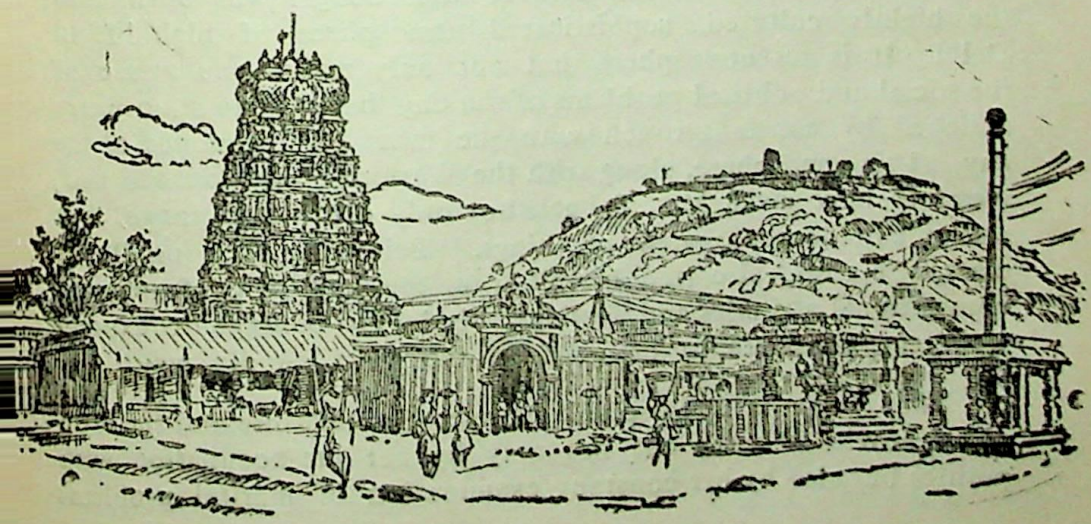
4. Benjamin Nelson, *Arthur Miller : Portrait of a Playwright* (London : Peter Owen, 1970), p. 86.

5. Arthur Miller, *After the Fall* (New York : Bantam Books, The Viking Press, 1964), p. 32.

6. Ibid, p. 16.

7. Arthur Miller, *Incident at Vichy* (New York : The Viking Press, 1965), p. 54.

8. Paul Blumberg, "Sociology and Social Literature : Alienation in the Plays of Arthur Miller" American *Quarterly* 21, No. 2 (Summer 1969), p. 293.



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THE NOVELS OF NAYANTARA SAHGAL

Dr. P. RAMACHANDRAIAH

The achievement of Nayantara Sahgal as a writer is quite an impressive one. With seven novels (*A Time to be Happy, This Time of Morning, Storm in Chandigarh, The Day in Shadow, A Situation in New Delhi, Rich Like Us, Plans For Departure*), two autobiographical works (*Prison and Chocolate Cake* and *From Fear Set Free*) and a book of history (*History of the Freedom Movement*) to her credit, she has made her mark, if not among the top-ranking craftsmen like Narayan, Raja Rao and Anand, atleast among other significant voices in the realm of Indo-Anglian fiction. Active enough both as a novelist and a champion of the emancipated woman, she is "essentially a writer who extends and enriches an Indian creative tradition that includes, among numerous others, Tagore and Sarat Chandra".[1] Considering the depth and sophistication of her novels one feels tempted to say that it is the case of a writer still awaiting adequate critical recognition.

The second daughter of Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit and the niece of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Mrs Sahgal was born into the hightly cultured, sophisticated atmosphere of high life in Delhi. It is an atmosphere that not only makes one aware of the social and political problems of the day, but also an atmosphere enriched by constant touch with the most leading minds of the day. This atmosphere, along with the Western education she had, seems to have given Mrs. Sahgal, not only depth and range, but also a kaleidoscopic view of things. Belonging to a privileged class, she could also free herself from the need for conformity to conventional attitudes and feelings, displaying courage to express what she considers to be good in the most candid way.

That there is a close link between Sahgal's life and the stuff of her novels is borne out not only by her pre-occupation with politics but also by her constant examination of marital problems

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of men and women. Especially some of her women characters such as Kusum and Saroj seem to reflect her own problems, and Saroj in *Storm in Chandigarh* seems to be such an accurate projection of herself that this novel, along with *A Time to be Happy*, has come to be regarded as her emotional autobiography. She herself acknowledges this when she says that there were " pieces of me going into the men and women I created when I really began to write ".[2]

Mrs; Sahgal's birth and upbringing also seem to have influenced her choice of themes. Most of her novels deal with political expediency employed in solving the Chandigarh problem, the misunderstandings and quarrels among ministers and professional elections and the role of money in them. She considers her novels to be political in content and she says " each of the novels more or less reflect the political era we were passing through ".[3] Her fictional world is occupied by political leaders, business tycoons, foreign advisers, upper class people, journalists and highly qualified persons like ambassadors, ministers, vice-chancellors and professors. With these political themes is often combined the theme of man-woman relationship, their marital problems, their temperamental incompatibility, the problems arising out of their ego or submissiveness, and finally the problem of the place of woman in society.

If Mulk Raj Anand's novel's show the personal pre-occupation with the working and the middle classes and their problems, Sahgal's novels concern themselves with the dialect of the high life in cosmopolitan cities. It is a life marked by a greater degree of sophistication than the life presented in Kamala Markandaya's novels. Shyam M. Asnani remarks about the " selective world of upper class people of power and position in her novels ".[4] The dynamic life-styles of those circles and their changing traditions provide her with the material. People of other classes of society may occasionally bob into this world but they certainly do not belong there.

The meeting point between this life and the outside world, in Sahgal's novels, is politics or administration. So, the scene of action always is either the drawing rooms of a society lady, the bungalow of a minister or ambassador, the posh residence of a vice-chancellor, the office of a top officer, the party thrown by a climbing businessman or the neatly trimmed garden of an equally important person. And the things talked about are parties, varieties of wine, picnics, marital relationships, divorces, settlements, litigations, positions, politics and student-violence. It is just the stuff of restoration comedy of manners, with this difference — that politics is not part of the game of those comedies

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and that we don't find in Sahgal's Devi, Saroj or Simrit, the hypocricy and smuttiness of a Lady Wishfort or Mrs. Pinch-wife.

But we cannot characterize Sahgal's novels as novels of manners; nor can we call them political novels, in spite of the fact that very often the action unfolds itself against the background of important political upheavals of the times. For it is not what happens in politics that finally matters in the story. It is what happens to a Devi, an Usman, an Inder, a Vishal Dubey, a Saroj that engages our attention. Though the nuances of arranging parties, of receiving guests or of making a polite conversation does count in this world, we are soon made to look beyond them into the conflicts raging at the bottom. It is these conflicts which constitute the central stuff of Sahgal's novels.

And the conflicts spring mainly from an absence of communication, and the resultant estrangement, between individuals — husband and wife, mother and son, between the vice-chancellor and his students, between the politician and the beaurocrat, even between the host and the guest, between social classes, creeds and groups. With all her love and admiration for her son Rishad, Devi feels the presence of an unsurmountable gap between him and herself. If finally Rishad ends up as a member of an extremist group, his own sense of estrangement from his mother is no less responsible for it. As a matter of fact, the very political confusion presented in the novel can be traced to the estrangement of the leaders from their public, in the absence of a communicating and binding personality like Shivaraj's, just as all the storm in Chandigarh can be attributed, at one level, to the estrangement between Gyan Singh and Harpal Singh. "What use was he in a set up that had forged no working alliance between government and civil servant?", Vishal Dubey asks himself in *Storm in Chandigarh*,[5] but it is just the matter with others also in the novel. What dawns on people is the realization that "two people could live in intimacy all their adult lives and still remain strangers to each other". Saroj comes to know that "she could not tear away the blinds between herself and Inder."[6] And the sum and substance of it all is that "we're the lonely ones, you and I".[7] All other issues in the narration always seem to be subordinated to this problem of estrangement. Simrit in *The Day in Shadow*, like Saroj, finds herself shut out of Som's world. She feels uprooted and abandoned in a 'husband-centred' world. For her divorce does not bring freedom; instead, it is a confrontation with all that is orthodox and confining in Indian society. She is estranged not by Som's rough methods but by his growing obsession with power and possession. This concern of Mrs. Sahgal with the

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predicament of the individual, especially of women, in a world dominated by power and privilege, determines her narrative technique. Because the central business is the gradually emerging awareness in the Indian woman of the inadequacy of her social and sexual identity, the omniscient narrator feels obliged to take us frequently into the minds of Devi, Saroj or Mara by means of what Wayne Booth calls 'inside views'. This results in the telling of the story from multiple points of view, exploring the nuances of different psychological situations and unfolding the interesting drama of the inner conflicts of people caught in those strange situations.

If this estrangement sometimes leads to violence as in the raping of Madhu, beating of a vice-chancellor, the death of Rishad and the crude things that Gyan Singh does — such violence is rarely brought to the centre of the stage in the novel. The omniscient narrator casually reports it and then goes on to concern herself with an analysis of the problem of estrangement itself. What we thus have is a deep probing into the desires, motives, fears and inhibitions of people.

This kind of probing necessitates the telling of the story from the points of view of all these characters who are victims of estrangement. So, Sahgal frequently employs a multiple point of view, taking the reader straight into the minds of those characters and making him watch leisurely what is happening there. The emphasis is on the landscape of the mind, not so much on what happens outside. The result is, we are always in the company of brooding, contemplating, longing or regretting characters who seldom go beyond thinking, praising, blaming, reminiscing, understanding or misunderstanding. No sooner are we introduced to a character than it slips into its own inner depths.

Naturally, therefore, there is not much 'action' in Sahgal's novels. Of course, action in the sense of doing things or 'things happening' is also lacking in such great novels as, say, Raja Rao's *The Serpant and the Rope*. But this absence of action is compensated by the spectacular way in which the multifaceted personality of a Ramaswamy or a Madeleine comes to life there. And what strikes us there is the rare substantialness of the world in which the characters of Raja Rao move, apart from the powerful situations he creates. But in the case of Sahgal, we feel that something is wanting even in her most intricate situations. And in spite of all the microscopic examination of the working of their minds, her characters fail to assume a clear form or a convincing existence of their own. At best, it must be admitted, they remain shadowy figures, or mouthpieces for long

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arguments about social assumptions governing sex and morality. " Character portrayal takes place in a number of ways in her novels ", claims Jasbir Jain, [8] but one wonders whether all these ways lead, in the novels, to the conception of characters from what T. S. Eliot calls " emotional unity ".

If, in spite of this weak point in her characters, the reader feels engaged by them, it is because he is struck by the commitment that Sahgal displays about the problems of these characters. He feels that he is in touch with a sensitive probing mind impatient with the 'lady of Shalott' image of the domesticated Indian woman which is often to be found in the contemporary fiction and which is a complex of certain social and literary conditions and attitudes. Deviating from the portrayal of the self-enclosed woman who is often conceived within a certain accepted moral scheme, Mrs. Sahgal draws, in her characteristically unorthodox way, the picture of a woman who restlessly tries to tread out of her confineness which seem to limit her horizons. It is in these pictures that Mrs. Sahgal's novels have their origin and their strength.

This strength seems to derive from the strongly held convictions of Mrs. Sahgal about the emancipation of women and about man-woman relationship. Mrs. Sahgal seems to feel that in the process of emancipation, the Indian women have to overcome not only hardened social opinions but also their own fears, inhibitions and their temptation to conform. As Sahgal sees it, their conformist attitudes are only too readily strengthened by men who want to cling to their pampered status and who want an endless perpetuation of the subjugation of woman to a limited conventional role. This, for Sahgal, is symbolic of a universal tragedy a result of the stifling of individual emotions and intuitions by organised social structures. She is, therefore, naturally concerned about the complex of literary and social conventions and attitudes that go to create the images of submissive women.

Mrs. Sahgal's interest in presenting such images is not just the result of a feminist angle. Rather it is the result of her awareness that this passiveness or submissiveness, springing from a cult of conformity, rocks the very basis of the man-woman relationship and creates a situation in which people mechanically feel committed to " continuing the adventure of being man and woman in the confusion of living ".[9] Thus, what Mrs. Sahgal is concerned about not merely the emergence of the new woman but the emergence of a new human situation in which the " oxygen of understanding " always invigorates the individual.

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Notes

1. M. N. Sharma, *Nayantara Sahgal's Novels : Some Thematic Concerns . Journal of Indian Writing in English,* January 1976, Volume 4.
2. *This Time of Fulfilment.* Femina, 7-20. May, 1976, P. 15
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A PLANT'S WORDS

YOGESH G. NAIR

Long ago, we felt
That the absence of freedom,
To roam about, and enjoy life,
Is really a limitation
For us.
But today, we feel
That it is a blessing
For we saw these men,
Who had this freedom,
To move about,
On all continents,
Fight for a country,
Or state of their own,
And their freedom is chained,
By many rules and regulations
And we saw many fight,
And die for a state, or country,
And drops of blood from them, have marred
The beauty of our leaves and flowers.

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THE ROAD WAS BROAD BUT BLIND

JATINDRA MOHAN GANGULI

The road was straight and smooth, wide and broad, and gay and bright too.

When I came on it from my abode inside a narrow lane, my eyes opened with wonder, and what a thrill of joy ran through my frame! I saw so many here, laughing, playing, moving and talking.

This is life, I thought, what else could it be? There was stir on all sides, vigour in all movements, and the blowing breeze brought an urge to do and act. I thought of the lonely quiet corner in my lane from where I had emerged into this life and light. There, if I was getting lost in reflections over my I, my self, who it is,, wherefrom, and how and why it comes and where it goes, what it needs, what it wants—here, as I look out, it seems that my I is but one of the so many other things around me, and that there is nothing to know about it. Life seems to be so many impulses, so many urges, which activate us and living means following them. Happiness does not seem to come from inside, but from following the urges of the body as they come and from serving the many desires as they form and demand. On the road of life all things are there to satisfy my wishes and fancies. They are only to be gathered and possessed, and if I have the means it looks so easy to obtain them.

And, so, my one absorbing thought now is to procure the means—the money. I go to earn; I labour to earn; I run on the scent of money; I sit up in the night thinking and dreaming of money. When I have the money I shall get all; I shall eat and drink and enjoy as I like. On this broad road all are to be found.

As I think so I do. Thinking and doing here go together. There's no halting, no hesitating, no questioning; otherwise I shall be left behind. I have left the reins to my mind, which is

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carrying me merrily on the wide boulevard of life. I never knew that I could go like this. How the fancies come and how each one blows me from one place to another. I run to things which attract me, and, when I can, I catch and possess whatever catches my mind. This is what everyone here is doing. Running and picking, storing and possessing, with all the vigour and animation of what life seems to be. I begin and try to do likewise. I must go with the rush. I follow the swelling urges and desires and, as I do so, they swell up more and become stranger and make me run faster with the dash of impatience. Before I have attended to one desire there's another looking in; but there is an exciting pleasure each time which leads me through wear and tear, fatigue and uncertainty. I fall and get up again; I get rubbed and bruised by strong and zealous people, but I am healed by a show of pity and a smile of love which they throw at me.

Sometimes, when the occasional falls and bruises disconcert me and turn me back to the thoughts of my old abode my mind argues — "But these only make life the fuller and more joyful. Rise from a fall brings a fresh impulse and a keener desire; healing of a wound brings another urge."

The argument is good and true, for, on all sides that's what I see. A fall makes one run faster; disappointment makes one more ardent in desire; a loss makes one grip and hold on to what is left with teeth and nail; a coin stolen makes one bury underground the money in hand. And, not only that, it is from such doings, running, re-desiring that they derive the joy of life.

I follow and more on. I don't want to get behind in the sweeping march on the broad road of life. I go as my mind directs and desires urge. There's little to gain from arguing and disputing with them; for, as I progress onward my desires become stronger and my I, my self, the weaker. I have yielded to their call throwing away the hold that I ever had on them, and, now, I am riding on without the reins in my hand But the prospect is cheerful and I dispell the misgivings which sometimes peep in.

"After all my mind cannot betray me, for, it is only following the nature of things, the ways of life, the steps of so many others who have gone ahead and who are going in my company" — so I say to myself and relax into the lightheartedness that comes when one leaves oneself in the hands of another to be led and guided, and frees himself from the anxiety of looking after himself. But, though I have made myself light by throwing down that anxiety, I have weighted myself with what I have been collecting and putting into my pocket and on my head. My possessions have

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been increasing and so also my craving for them. They have given me joy and pleasure and satisfied my aims and desires. And so also the many charms and attractions of life here which have given thrills and excitements and allured me on and on.

Yet, sometimes I am distracted and feel out of sorts. With all that I am not feeling the happier. My capacity to be happy in the way in which I had thought I would be is weakening. Obedience to desires is leaving me in fatigue and lassitude. The happiness that I had sought is missing. What I have is but a burn, to cool down which I have to run again for something and again for something. I look around to see if the feeling that is coldly creeping in me is also troubling others who are similarly walking on with me and I notice that things are getting wrong with them also. Bonds of love and attachment, which had grouped them are wearing. The road onward is narrowing and the ground can no more keep together. They pause; the path looks like coming to an end. Is the road blind, the road we have come, the road of life as we had thought it to be? The question worries them all as their vision is blocked by a boulder which lies across and cuts off the narrowing lane. The haziness of late afternoon is hanging down from the sky above.

I halt with the rest, tired and exhausted, out of breath. I looked back and wished to return to my little abode in the narrow lane where I had opened my eyes in the morning and seen flash of gold on the east. There the sky was clear, the air was light and soft, and my inside, my feelings, my thoughts, were un-torn by pulls and shifts and struggles, hankerings and cravings, fears, excitements, ever burning worries and uncertainties. There, there was no competition to push and beat and win and no impatient impulse to do what another did and to get what shone and glittered in another's hand.

How free, how light I was in my little place and what abundance of leisure was there to look above, to think, to imagine, to reflect. How freely and extensively my vision could stretch out there over the wide blue sky. O, the sweet little corner which I left to come out on this wide road, which proved to be blind. Where is the company that I had sought, and whose joys and pleasures I had wished to share? And, where are those colours that had thrilled me, that splendour which had beckoned me to come out on this blind road?

I feel so lovely, so vacant, so hollow now. Where's my I, my self? I lost that on the way. That must have dropped out and returned to the quiet, little place where I was, while I looked out on the glittering things on the way and kept my eyes on them

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and on the road which I treaded. I sit down at the end of the blind road and wonder how I can be happy without my I, my self. I eat but get no taste ; I see but no light ; I touch but do not feel, I desire, I long, I wish, but the body cannot satisfy. I had tried in vain to get pleasure, joy, satisfaction, fulfilment, happiness all from the body. But this body of flesh and bones — what can it give ?

GIVE ME THIS BOON

Dr. PUTTAPARTHI NARAYANACHARYULU

O God, wherever you are,
In the heavens or elsewhere,
Grant me this boon.

Make me poor,
But not of heart.
Give me life,
But never bid me to live
Among the heartless
To be a toy to their wickedness.
Give me intellect,
But not the ability to understand
The past.
Save me from pride.

You may give me feelings,
But see they are not partisan.
Give me the power
Never to be carried away
By narrow creeds and dogmas.

Make me a crystal,
And make me human.
Only give me this boon.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I read with interest the article on Indian Painting by Romen Palit in "Triveni" Vol. 56 No 1. It is really surprising and also sad that the writer of the essay did not mention even one eminent Andhra artist in his long list excepting V. R. Chitra. Does it mean that great artists of Andhra like Damerla Rama Rao, Kouta Anand Mohan, Adivi Bapiraju, Ankala Venkata Subba Rao, Chamakur Satyanarayana, Varada Venkataratnam, Chavali Nageswara Rao, apart from a host of others, are also not known outside of Andhra? Or, are the art critics and artists of other States deliberately ignoring the artists of Andhra?

"It is not that other provinces lacked creativity in art form and art creation, but they produced objects not extraordinary or having vigour of genuine creation", says Palit. Should this statement go unchallenged?

Yours sincerely,
M. S. SARMA

THOUGHT MINIM

N. S. KRISHNA MURTI

Habitant is He
You become the inhabitant of the world
The body is the habitat,
You mistake the same by habit
Habitual habitat is the body
It has to be left behind as
You are He,
the Habitant.

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REVIEWS

Jawaharlal Nehru on Science. Nehru Memorial Museum & Library, Teenmurti House, New Delhi-11.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was an optimist with a look forward in every activity of his, and particularly in the governance of India when he became the Prime Minister. Science had always a great fascination for him. So even before India obtained indpendence he was eager for his country's progress in science of the modern age. As early as 1938, when sending his message to the Silver Jubilee of the Science Cogress at Calcutta, he emphasised the need for science to be related to the future planning of the country's economic and industrial growth. Naturally when as a Prime Minister he was asked to inaugurate or preside over Science Congresses, he was particular about the advance of science useful in its fullest way to the elimination of India's backwardness in the then condition.

From 1950 to 1964, till his death, no occasion he left for harping on the theme of science to be put only to good use and not to destruction of the kind which the atom bomb did in Hiroshima. He observed in 1957, at Calcutta : "The scientist is supposed to be an objective seeker after truth and science has grown because in a large measure the great scientists have sought truth in that way. But no man, I suppose today, not even the scientist, can live in a world of his own, in some kind of ivory tower, cut off from what is happening and cut off from the effect of his own work which is so powerfully affecting the destiny of humanity. And therefore science today has perhaps begun to overlap the borders of morals and ethics."

Here are collected sixteen of his addresses to the Science Congresses which were held in all the important cities of the Indian Union. His mind ever dwelt upon pure science to be harnessed to constructive uses in the way of the general progress of India and never assume a Janus face with two sides of constructive and destructive application of new discoveries. In between, some of

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his reflections upon Truth as a guiding force for seekers in research and discoverers in technology, read so full of his utter feeling for the poor and forlorn that one is tempted to say " here is a philosopher-progressivist. "

The Introduction to this volume and the Annexure are well conceived and help the reader to find in a nutshell the trends of Nehru's thoughts. — K. CHANDRASEKARAN

Triadic Mysticism: By Paul E. Murphy. Motilal Banarsidass Jawahar Nagar, New Delhi-7. Price : Rs. 120.

It is pleasing to see a Police Officer from U. S A. writing a thesis on Kashmir Shaivism, bringing out its salient features at different levels, viz., philosophical, theological, yogic, devotional His studies in Christian theology enable him to make a constructive comparative study between Shaivism and Catholic mysticism.

Giving an account of the system, he writes : " The Supreme Shiva, in order to realise one aspect of his infinite nature, the phenomenal and multifarious universe, sets aside his divinity and enters the spatio-temporal realm of the finite — the product of his own creation. He accomplishes this feat through his Mirific Power which masks his undifferentiated luminosity and, through myriad diverse manifestations, projects the cosmic world of phenomenal and noumenal reality. God becomes man. But this setting forth on the finite road of existence is only the first half of the divine journey; having satisfied the need to discover his cosmic reality, Shiva liberates himself from the bonds of manifestation, and, through the same Mirific Power, returns to his unicity upon the very road previously travelled. Thus, according to Triadic theology man's essential nature is divine ; he attains liberation, even in this life, when he comes to realise his true Shiva-nature and in consequence, returns to his original state of union with the undifferentiated Light. "

There are four ways of effecting this liberation : Kaula Marga, where the individual pursues yogic practices ; Shakti Marga, mainly through the awakening and rise of the Kundalini Power ; Shunya Marga, arriving at the non-duality of Shiva through an act of Grace ; Ananda Marga, instant self-recognition resulting in perpetual bliss.

The author gives a satisfying account of the rise and development of these schools, their expounders like Abhinava Gupta. He describes in detail the various components of each discipline, including ritual sex. He is careful to cite authorities to emphasise that this aspect of using the sex petential to attain the Highest

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is open only to those who have arisen above desire and passion. This section of the book is highly educative and clarifies a much misunderstood approach.

In his study of the parallels between the triadic and catholic systems, he pinpoints the askesis of self-annihilation, the dark night of mystical awakening, the inferior stage and the superior in mystical progression, etc.

Certainly an important contribution to the study of the Trika System and comparative mysticism. One wishes the author expands his presentation in the near future. — M. P. PANDIT

Devotional Songs of Narsi Mehta: Translated by Swami Mahadevananda. With an introduction by Sivapriyananda. Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi-7. Price: Rs. 80.

"A true Vaishnava has compassion for all,
any who suffer he helps,
But having helped he never then feels
Proud of the deed he has done.
He will bow down his head
and make himself low
To all, he despises none.
He is pure in his thoughts, in his speech
and his deeds.
Their mothers are blessed by such one"

The very essence of Vaishnavism was thus crystallised by the Gujarati poet Narsi Mehta; such had been the figure of Ramanuja who spread Vaishnavism all over India and ushered in the age of Sattvic Bhakti and surrender to the Lord.

Narsi Mehta's (1414-1480) gentle, upright life, his Krishna-bhakti and devotional outpourings helped Hinduism withstand the assault of Islam over Saurashtra at a time when Muslim rule had been firmly established in Gujarat Several of his poems were but free, mellifluous translations of passages in the tenth Skandha of the Bhagavata. Jayadeva's *Gita Govinda* inspired Narsi's *Sringara Mala* and *Sringara Na Pado*. His autobiographical ventures were *Ma-merun* and *Samalsa no vivah*, Towards the closing years of his life the sensuous Bhakti Yoga of Narsi ripened into sterling Jnana Yoga and these reflections launch us on a rare adventure of consciousness leading to total surrender to the Divine:

"In enjoying this world all become suffocated,
Without the Guru's guidance all go astray
They get caught in word-games, and so in this way
They throw good clothes away and wear rags."

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Humility: surrender. Such is the make-up of the true Vaishnava. Swami Mahadevananda (Roger Timms) has provided an excellent translation of choice lyrics while Sivapriyananda's introduction gives us in brief all that we need to know of Narsi Mehta.

— DR. PREMA NANDAKUMAR

Fundamentals of the Philosophy of Tantras: By Manoranjan Basu. Mira Basu Publishers, 50-B, Haldarpara Road, Calcutta-6. Price: Rs. 200

Sir John Woodroff opened our eyes to the deep ocean of Tantric literature and gems of truths ensconced therein, by his publications of Tantric texts, their translations and expositions. A systematic and comprehensive study of Tantras as propounding a system of philosophy, like Saamkhya, and Yoga, etc., is not attempted by anyone. Herein lies the importance of this book under review which is the result of the author's deep study of more than 50 books on the relevant subject.

In a compass of nine chapters the author deals with the theoretical and practical aspects of this Tantric system. After a historical study, the author deals with the ontology and epistomology, goal and means, and gives us clear-cut picture. The theory of evolution is explained with the plates in colour, and any reader cannot but appreciate the author for his skill in presenting this subject in a pictureque way.

Many technical terms like " Suddha Vidyaa, " " Kalas ", " Bindu ", " Svaatantrya ", " Purnaahamta ", " Naada, " etc., are explained. Mysticism of Tantra's is compared with that of Vedas and Upanishads, and different experiences as recorded in different Agamas and Tantras are described. A comparative study of Yogas including Aurobindo's Integral Yoga, and " Akhanda Mahaa Yoga " is instituted. Significance of Mantra, Yantra and Japa, etc., is brought out. Nature and importance of Kundalini and Chakras in our body, according to Tantras and Naatha tradition are dealt with. Relevancy of the message of Tantras to the modern world is pointed out. Tantras are shown ways of realisation. Charges against some Tantric concepts are answered. It may be noted here that the author, throughout the work, does not forget to correlate the thoughts of this system with those of modern science wherever possible. We do not have a better book on this subject and we are all praise for the author.

— B. KUTUMBA RAO

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Bhuma : By Lakshminaryana Mahapatro (Tr) Prof. Asit, Vijaya Publications, 776, Daryabag, Allahabad. Price Rs. 10. Lib. ed. Rs. 40.

The Lone Boatman and Other Poems : By Lakshminarayana Mahapatro. Distributors : D. K. Book Organisation, 74-B, Anandanagar, Delhi-110 035.

Lakshminarayana Mahapatro is a distinguished bilingual poet. He writes in Oriya as well as in English. These free-flowing translations are really re-creations of the original Oriya poetic thought and image in English. The language is equal to the sublime philosophical theme the author had chosen for both the books. The quest of individual soul on shoreless seas of time and eternity in order to merge with the Absolute. It is simple, sensous and beautiful. Allegory, symbol and image are generously and dexterously used to communicate abstract philosophical thought with which every para is loaded to the brim. The skill with which the poet is able to fuse different philosphical systems together and transform the whole into sensuous poetry is indeed a marvel.

In *Bhuma*, Mahapatro actually renders a few lines from the Upanishads. At the head of the epic poem Bhuma, he plants a translated verse from Kathopanishad. The title Bhuma itself comes from the Upanishads and gives us a hint to understand the underlying unity of the epic. It is the name of the famous *Vedavidyas* long forgotten but revived in modern times by Kavya-kantha Vasishtha Ganapati Muni (1878-1936).

The trouble with this kind of poetry is that it does not take into account the difficulties of the average English reader. These poets forget those who write in English tradition have a unique advantage in that European religio-philosophical thought and mythology are widely understood all over the world while Hindu thought and mythology do not have such global sweep. This type of poetry hence needs a sort of brief annotations a la T. S. Eliot's *The Wasteland.*

— Dr. G. Srirama murty

The Submerged Valley and Other Stories : By Manoj Das. Batstone Books, 24, Gliucester Street, Malmesbury, Wiltshire. U. K. Price : Rs. 25.

The ill-lit Kalingan villages laid under siege by superstitions and poverty, ringed with the light-and-dark of native wisdom and struggling to accept the inevitable change brought on by "modern" civilisation, offer a rich territory for Manoj's explorations. The

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vaporous fantasies of old age are a recurrent theme and give us delicate embroideries in "The Crocodile's Lady", "The Dusky Hour" and "The Bridge in the Moonlit Night". The many faces of individual heroism are efficiently outlined in "The Submerged Valley", "The General" and "Prithviraj's Horse". The ease of rapid invention exhibited by Mr. Das is really a tribute to the distant days of his childhood, boyhood and youth, and his style is a breath-taking tight-rope walk between smiles and tears. The pomposities of politicians and the angularities of the rich do not escape his eye, while his compassionate heart salutes the goodness, the innocence and the sincerity which are plentiful in the common man.

Though couched in excellent, transparent English, the stories in *The Submerged Valley* convey a complete Indian experience, be it a ghost held in loving reverence by villagers, a sacred owl of a temple or a tree about to be uprooted by floods. Despite the generous use of the baseless fabric of astral phenomena the stories have an assured sense of dramatic reality. And Manoj's observation of the Indian way of life is exact, disconcertingly photographic :

> "Binu slowly revealed his face. He was visibly feeling reassured. His face recorded the kind of satisfaction an infant shows when the elders kick the floor on which it had slipped."

— DR. PREMA NANDAKUMAR

Rig Vedic Studies (VII) *Purusha Sukta*: By M. Sundar Raj. International Society for the Investigation of Ancient Civilisation, 31, Poes Garden, Madras-86. Price: Rs. 20.

Continuing his studies in the Vedas, the learned author takes up in this book the Purusha Sukta (Rig Veda, X 90) with a view to bringing out its deeper import from the veil of symbols. He holds, and rightly, that the hymns of the Veda are not to be taken literally. There are many possible meanings: ritualistic, naturalistic, psychological, etymological, symbolic. The author has an approach of his own. He sees a significant opening on the ancient litany in the use of *slesha* and what he calls "assonance symbolism", repetition of the same sounds giving a clue to a wealth of meaning. He explains the hymn of the Cosmic Purusha in these terms and draws upon the hymn of Creation also to substantiate his thesis Whether one agrees with his interpretation or not, this is an effort that stimulates deeper study of the hymns instead of stopping at the superficial expositions by oriental scholarship.

— M. P. PANDIT

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Red Oleander—Tagore: By Ananda Lal. Writers' Workshop, Calcutta-45. Price: Rs. 40.

This is an English translation from the Bengali of the poet's original. Feeling the existing English translation by Tagore himself as inadequate, the present author has tried to retain the flavours and rhythm of the original Bengali in the translation. *Rakta Karabi* in Bengali is a play with a deep significance of thought inlaid. The greed for amassing wealth at the cost of a fulfilling life of love is the chief motif, though the many characters on the stage make the whole purport somewhat difficult of understanding. The method employed by the poet for his message to the reader, or more the audience witnessing the play, is to make them linger and pause before alighting on the unfolding of the mind in its travail to reach the haven of security in love. As the present author has owned, it is no doubt a very exacting task to provide non-Bengali readers adequate satisfaction of having clearly obtained the poet's subtle communication to the world.

— K. CHANDRASEKHARAN

The Incarnation: By Neela Padmanabhan. Writers' Workshop, Lake Gardens, Calcutta-45. Price: Rs. 60.

Neela Padmanabhan is a writer well known for his novels and short stories in Tamil. Here are collected twenty of his short stories and translated into English. They seem to have been written in Tamil between 1956 and 1971 and also found in his collected works. A selection from them has found its way into this volume.

Dr. K. M. George has foreworded the stories in almost very high praise for their originality and their preservation of both Tamil and Kerala atmosphere. Sri M. S. Ramaswami, a keen student of literature and arts, emphasises in the concluding pages the author's vast experience of life in all its myriad-headed aspects. On the whole with two sentinels, as it were, guarding the reputation of the author, the publisher has ventured to send the book to journals for reviews. Indeed it may embarrass any reviewer should he be careless in his assessment of the book. The amphibian author holding his pen in two inkpots of Tamil and Malayalam necessarily cannot escape the nurture of the two climes. His stories are replete with the various habits and distint cultures of the two adjacent States.

No doubt the first and the last story in this volume by themselves are sufficient to prove the writer's merit to instil in the reader that without much imagination and skill of narration

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their significances could not have been so powerfully left in the readers. "Unresponded" really makes us frozen even as Ravi in the story. An unintended tragedy it looks even to the writer, which renders the pathos doubly deepening. "Clock" is so well conceived and executed that we are sure to appreciate the dying man's comparison to the clock which is as uncertain as the pendulam's movement to push the hand of time.

In between are a variety of experiences assuming shapes with the waving of the magic wand and the time taken to finish reading will not prove a waste. Sometimes, because of the different translator's language, a feeling of drag occurs. Still, the fact the stories require rereading for understanding the full purport contained reconciles often the reader to tolerate the translation.

—K. CHANDRASAKHARAN

KANNADA

DVG Kriti Sreni: Kannada mattu Samskriti: Edited by Dr, H. M. Nayak. Nirdeshanalaya, Nripatunga Road, Bangalore-2. Price : Rs. 30.

Devanahally Venkataramanayya Gundappa, D. V. G. as he was popularly known, was a doyen of the modern Kannada literature. A man of immense learning and varied interests, he was known throughout Karnataka. He was a self-made poet-scholar. He has worked in several fields, viz , Language, Literature, Journalism, Politics, Public affairs, etc. His active literary career was spread over more than six decades. He was a poet, playwright, translator, essayist, biographer, critic, scholar, philosopher, journalist and what not ?

The complete work series of D. V. G. brought out by the Directorate of Kannada and Culture is titled as *D. V. G. Kriti Sreni*. Now the first volume is released and it consists the critical and inquisitive works of D. V. G. The books collated here are 1) Jeevana Saundarya mattu Saahitya ; 2) Saahitya Shakti; 3) Kavya Svaarasya ; 4) Baligondu Nambike ; 5) Samskriti ; 6) Devaru ; 7) Rita, Satya mattu Dharma. Of these the first three books deal with different aspects of poetics and literary criticism as well as language teaching and development ; the rest with Indian aptitude of life, culture, religion and philosophy.

"Jeevana Soundarya mattu Saahitya" is hailed as a master-piece of D. V. G's critical theory. This was first published in 1932. In the six articles compiled here D. V. G. discusses the nature of language, literature and aesthetics. He was the first to deal the beauties of literature with concrete examples. In his twelve essays of "Saahitya Sakti", he has predominantly examined

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the relation of literature with politics, science, education and philosophy. The influence and effect of literature on different walks of life is also elucidated here. The concept of Hasa, Dhwani Rasika and usefulness of poetry are discussed in detail in his "Kaavya Svaarasya". The lengthy article on Mahabharata, in this book, reflects his attitude towards life and literature. The concept, aim and fineness of life is the subject matter of his "Baligondu Nambike". A threadbear discussion of "faith", rooted in Indian tradition, is made here. Basing on the ideas and theories of Matthew Arnold and Cardinal Newman, D. V. G. has written his "Samskriti". Here the concept of Indian culture and the characteristics of individual culture are clearly shown. In his booklets he has tried to establish the existence of God and other religious values.

The editor of the present volume and the whole series is Dr. H. M. Nayak who is an eminent scholar and a noted columnist of Kannada literature. He is a veteran in executing this type of work. He has planned the present volume and the complete series neatly and meaningfully. His arresting introduction offers a new look at the life activities and achievements of D. V. G.

— N. S. THARANATHA

SAMSKRIT

Nyaaya Mimaamsa Darshanayoh Pramaana Vichaarah: By Dr. S. B. Raghunathacharya. Padmasri Publications, T. Nagar, Tirupati. Price: Rs. 150.

This work under review which is a thesis approved for the Vidyaavarnidhi (Ph. D.) degree of Sampurnananda University, is written in lucid but majestic Sanskrit. Herein we have, for the first time, a comparative and critical study of "Pramaanas" or valid means of knowledge and allied subjects as dealt with in the works of "Nyaaya" and "Vaiseshika" systems on the one hand, and the "Mimamsa" schools of both Bhatta and Prabhakara on the other.

All important works beginning with Sutras and ending with the latest works are consulted and referred to. An introductory chapter deals with the definitions of "Jnaana", "Pramaana" and "Khyaatis". Definitions of "Pramaanaas"—Perception, Inference, Verbal testimony, Simile and presumption, etc., with their divisions, and allied subjects, like "Hetvaabhaasas" of fallacious arguments, and relationship between Shabda and Artha, etc, are dealt with in the following five chapters. At the end of every section, after reviewing the views presented therein, the author

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gives his own opinion, and he generally is in favour of Naiyayikas. Twenty-eight conclusions arrived at throughout this study are again presented in one place in the last chapter. Charts showing the differences in the concepts of Jnaana, Pramaanas, Sannikarshas. Argumental fallacies, etc., facilitate an easy understanding of the subject It is a treat to read this book. A student of the above systems and a scholar will both enjoy and be benefitted by reading this. The introduction in English by Prof. V. Varacharya also deserves special mention and a keen study.

—B. KUTUMBA RAO

TELUGU

Peddana's Concept of Poetry: By Salva Krishna Murthy, Bhramara Books, L/27, 10th West Street, Kamaraj Nagar, Lattice Bridge Road, Madras-41. Price: Rs. 40.

This critique on the poetic art of Allasani Peddana is a dissertation for M. Lit., Degree. Peddana was an epoch-making poet reverentially referred to as Andhra Kavita Pitamaha (*Sarvatomukhandra Kavita Pitamaha* to be accurate). The author undertakes a micro-level study of the consummate artistry of the poet based on the Utpalamalika (Simhavalokana Utpalamalika to be accurate again) and proves that inimitable texture of composition, sensuousness, colourful imagination and cool enjoyable experience are the hallmarks of his poetry. He feels that Peddana's concept of poetry has evolved from the pivotal point of Srividya. Peddana was born into a background of Advaita philosophy and a mild tradition of Saakta; a Smarta Saivite at heart, and adopted a Vaishnava stance in the royal court without detriment to his conviction. Utpalamalika gives ample evidence of his Sreevidya background and some word compounds bear the stamp of Sankaracharya's *Soundaryalahari.*

These and some other interesting observations are contained in this innovative scholastic work. The author has high critical acumen, profound scholarship in aesthetics and allied disciplines. Universal acceptance of some of the conclusions of the author may not be possible but this is a painstaking effort and a brilliant study.

— DR. DHARA RAMANADHA SASTRY

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TRIVENI

A LITERARY AND CULTURAL QUARTERLY
Founded in 1928

Vol. 56 Nos. 3 & 4 October 1987 — March 1988

Founded by
K. RAMAKOTISWARA RAU

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Single Copy Rs. 12-00

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INFORMATION ABOUT 'TRIVENI'

'TRIVENI' is published during April, July, October and January—a new Volume commencing in April, every year. Subscriptions may begin with any Number but no enlistment will be made for periods of less than a year.

RATES OF ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

	Surface Mail	*Air Mail*
India and Sri Lanka	Rs. 40	—
Burma and Pakistan	65	Rs. 95
Other Asian Countries	65	95
North America	US $ 14	US $ 22
United Kingdom and Europe	£ 7	£ 14
Africa	Rs. 65	Rs. 140
Australia	A $ 10	A $ 20
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South and Central America	Rs. 65	Rs. 145

INTENDING SUBSCRIBERS are requested to remit the annual subscription in advance. A specimen copy of the current number can always be had on payment of Rs. 12-00 (Post free), and on enlistment the balance of Rs. 28-00 only need be paid to make up the subscription for the year.

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THE 'TRIVENI' SYMBOL

Padma (the Lotus) represents the purity of Love, Jyoti (the Flame) the light of Wisdom, and Vajra (the Thunderbolt of Indra) the splendour of Power.

★

TRIVENI *is devoted to Art, Literature and History. Its main function is to interpret the Indian Renaissance in its manifold aspects.*

TRIVENI *seeks to draw together cultured men and women in all lands and establish a fellowship of the spirit. All movements that make for Idealism, in India as well as elsewhere, receive particular attention in these columns. We count upon the willing and joyous co-operation of all lovers of the Beautiful and the True.*

May this votive offering prove acceptable to Him who is the source of the TRIVENI *— the Triple Stream of Love, Wisdom and Power !*

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Correction

Page 28. last line—For "Christendorm" read "Christendom"
Page 57. Last but one line—For "Siiles" read "Similes"

EDITED, PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY DR. BHAVARAJU NARASIMHA RAO
AT THE TRIVENI PRESS, MACHILIPATNAM-521 001

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OUR CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ITS MODERN ORIENTATION - II

SRI SWAMI RANGANADHANANDA

(Continued from the last number)

The Modern Orientation

We were discussing the nature of that cultural heritage that we have from the past in India — how was that tremendous experiment in human culture started on this continent by great thinkers, great sages, great philosophers ? What was its spiritual strength behind ? We discussed all these things and towards the end I said, as we come to the modern period, we find a sagging of spirits, all sorts of weaknesses coming in. And one particular point I had made and that was our political heritage has been broken several times, but our spiritual heritage has remained strong and steady and continuous. In Sanskrit we call them *Raja Vamsha* — political heritage, *Rishi Vamsha* — spiritual heritage. Anyone studying Indian history can see this distinction that the spiritual continuity of India has been unbroken. The political continuity of India has been broken again and again. The importance of the modern period is to strengthen our political status as a nation and to give a body politic to our eternal soul. A strong, steady body politic. When you come to the modern period we come to our connection with a dynamic culture of the West. In the medieval period we had assimilated the great Islamic culture, its social equality and almost every spiritual teacher and saint of the middle ages — from Nanak up to the eighteenth century — they were all Islamic in their social policy and Hindn in their spiritual policy. Something tremendous took place in them — a beautiful synthesis of culture of values to create an egalitarian, progressive, spiritual, social order. But conditions were unpropitious at that time. So many political tumulus were going on, invasions were going on. Towards the end of the period came the British, bringing a new culture to our country. In the eighteenth century, we are entering the modern period. The modern West had developed remarkably during the spiritnal

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sphere, philosophical sphere. India has invaded the rest of the world philosophically, spiritually, again and again. According to a famous British writer, E. J. Arwik — his book is called *The Message of Plato* — you can never understand Plato and Aristotle, without understanding the Upanishads. Study the Upanishads, you will find Plato and Aristotle clear to you. Otherwise you wouldn't understand it at all. So India has influenced so many of these foreign countries throughout history, in the world of thought, in the world of ideas, in the world of culture. Look at that scene presented by Plato—Socretes is to drink poison. Even that event can never happen in India. Socretes, the noblest of men, was condemned by the Athenian democracy as one who was misguiding the youth of Athens. Therefore, he must be killed. He must drink poison and die. Can you imagine a man like Socretes being put to death in a country like India? He will be the centre of worship. We will honour him.

Even later when Jesus Christ was crucified in Palastine, what is it due to? Intolerance. Intolerance of any new idea. Here, if Jesus Christ was here, he would have been worshipped, even in his lifetime, as divine. That is India's culture. But Bertrand Russell once said about such events like Socretes aud Jesus Christ and others, "If you teach the world faster than it can learn, you are in for trouble for yourself." That is what he said. Do not teach the world faster than they can learn. Socretes spoke something beyond the comprehension of Greeks at that time. Jesus did the same thing. Whereas such teachings are common to us.

When the Buddha spoke high ideas, highly metaphysical, highly rational, we all understood it, we accepted it at that time. Sankaracharya did it. Even today Swami Vivekananda — beautiful things he says—criticised our religion, our society. We did not kill him. We honour him. That is India. This wonderful country. That culture is behind us, that quality is there. And so you find throughout the ages, this wonderful idea, that particular last centuries not only in science and technology but also in political thought. India came in touch with this powerful culture of the West. It was a new experience. We had come in touch with Greek culture ages ago. That was also Western culture. But only just in the fringe of India. But this time India came under the political and cultural domination of the West through Britain, and Britain introduced the English language. We took up this English language. These are interactions between two great cultures — one long but weak, the other fresh and strong. This is an interesting study in the history of nineteenth century India. That is where to find the British well settled, organising the whole

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country politically and creating what you find today the political unity of India. We had lost it again and again. Congeries of little States fighting with each other. That was the condition at that time. We have to thank the British that they politically unified the whole of India and gave us the English language as a medium to get some of the most important Western cultural values and thoughts which our people absorbed. The contact of the West with India had various consequences. In the early stages it was frightening to us—we may lose our culture, we may lose everything—that feeling was there. Therefore, the first reaction to this Western culture was defensive. We shall not have anything to do with this. We shall stand on our own. That defensive attitude you can see. That was the beginning of the nineteenth century.

One great teacher who came at that time, a great thinker, a great leader, one of the outstanding personalities of the modern period was Raja Ram Mohan Roy. So early in our history of modern period and yet, versatile in his genius. Many things he has touched and they have all flowered later on, including journalism. He was a person who asked us to become modern, to base India on our own Vedantic heritage but taking also positive ideas from the West. That was Raja Ram Mohan Roy. On an equal basis we can establish relations with the West. But he came too early. There was no talk of equal basis at that time. The West was dominant. The West was ruling over India. How can there be equality between a slave and a master? But towards the end of the century the same idea came; it was expressed by Swami Vivekananda. Swami Vivekananda you will find was taking in the best of our culture and living it in his own life—in a short life of 50 years.

Men like Romain Rolland who have written on Shri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, refer to Shri Ramakrishna as the consummation of the two thousand years spiritual life of three hundred million people. That was Shri Ramakrishna. The whole life of India, its spiritual aspect was re-lived in Shri Ramakrishna's life. And, in Swami Vivekananda's, we found a dynamic personality with one wonderful quality—fearlessness and a spirit of acceptance of the modern West. We have accepted many cultural values from other cultures throughout our long history. And in this period Swami Vivekananda appeared with that attitude of acceptance. Our culture is not perfect. No culture is perfect. Every culture is an experiment.

Today, we have an opportunity to build a human culture on the soil of India. Whatever is weak in our culture we

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can strengthen with what is strong in Western culture. And he found all these cultures complementary, not contradictory What we have developed, the West will need. What they have developed, we shall need. Thus taking in what we lack we shall make India modern, progressive, etc.

This kind of an approach you find in Vivekananda literature. So the nineteenth century saw the action, reaction of forces on the soil of India. According to Western thinkers of that time they were expecting India will die with the touch of the Western culture. By political domination, cultural domination, religious domination this aged India full of weaknesses will die, a new India be created there. In many letters written at that time during the early British period you will find this idea that India will die in a short time. They were expecting it. But the opposite happened! This contact with the West roused the dormant spirit of India — the tremendous energies that have been there in the heart of Indians. And that burst out into a tremendous awakening. We call it the renaissance of the nineteenth century. India becoming young and vital once again.

You can see during the last hundred years one remarkable phenomenon and that is an ancient nation, an ancient culture, has become young, vital and full of youthful energy today. That is something tremendous. One of the great thinkers of the modern period was Dr. Brajendranath Seal. He was a collegemate of Swami Vivekananda. A brilliant intellectual. The one who wrote the first book on India's contribution to physical science. That book is called *Positive Sciences of the Ancient Hindus.* That is the first book of its kind. He has said about India—a beautiful expression, "India is ever ageing but never old." Going on ageing, never getting old. Getting fresh, getting youthful. What do you find in India today? Even demographically we are a young nation today. People between 15 and 35 — they constitute a majority of the population of India.

So, this is something amazing. With the touch of a powerful culture, many old cultures have perished. They have disappeared. But in this culture of India there is a tremendous inner strength. That inner strength found expression in a galaxy of great personalities who came in the modern period. They assimilated Western culture, English language and then they made India stronger by joining that strength of the West to the strength of India. This is the story of the nineteenth century. We had many social problems, many other national weaknesses of the time. So this action-reaction process threw up a tremendous number of movements; social reform movements, various changes coming.

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In fact, the whole of the modern period can be characterised as a period of change. Revolutionary change, nothing old is staying in the same way; constantly changing, because of this new energy that has come into our culture.

It was in Swami Vivekananda that this modern renaissance achieved its maturity, its real fullness and he could say boldly "We accept the great deliverances of Western culture." We threw a challenge to the West also that they need certain profound ideas of Indian culture. We shall have give and take on equal basis. That spirit you will find in the literature of Swami Vivekananda. That is why Prime Minister Nehru refers to Swami Vivekananda in a beautiful passage in his book *Discovery of India*: "Rooted in the past, with full of pride in India's heritage, Vivekananda was yet modern in his approach to life's problems. He was a kind of bridge between the past of India and her present." That is a beautiful tribute to Swamiji's personality.

Men like Romain Rolland and Tagore, also have said that Swamiji represented the perfect synthesis of East and West. Every type of human energy, which has been cancelling each other in every other culture, found a perfect harmony in Swami Vivekananda. Reason and fate, religion and science, ancient and modern, East and West, all found harmony in this remarkable personality. Romain Rolland concludes that para dealing with this subject by saying Swami Vivekananda was the personification of the harmony of all human energy. And he was a very young person. At the age of 29 he appeared at the Chicago Parliament of Religions. Literally, he conquered the mind and heart of that powerful country. And this conquest is the conquest which India has been engaged in from very ancient times.

It was Ashoka who gave expression to this idea of India's expansion into other countries. Other countries expand through military means and imperialism-colonialism. India's expansion is different. Ashoka said we shall silence the war drums. We shall now sound the kettle-drums of peace and harmony. That ancient message we have continued to uphold in India. I said, India's impact upon the world has always been peaceful. That impact has been mentioned by Ashoka in his edicts and Swami Vivekananda gives it in modern language. It is a beautiful sentence in the "Lectures from Colombo to Almora" of Swami Vivekananda. He says: "Like the gentle dew that falls unseen and unheard, yet brings in the blossom of the fairest of roses." Such has been the contribution of India to the thought of the world. Silent, unperceived, yet omnipotent in its effects; it has

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transformed the world but we do not know when it was done. Because history records only violent conflicts, war. Silent influences are not recorded in history.

So, India's impact on the world has been like this. In the modern period the same thing is continuing. Swami Vivekananda was going to America; and, though we were a slave nation at that time, he was able to impress upon the Western world about the wisdom of India, its high philosophy and spirituality. It has a tremendous message for all humanity. He initiated this wonderful exchange of ideas between East and West. He is a link between East and West. In the future ages it will be understood that world history and Indian history became intertwined through Swami Vivekananda. He had that spirit of acceptance. Tagore particularly recognised this spirit of acceptance in Swami Vivekananda's attitude and philosophy. When he met Romain Rolland in Europe in the 1920s, he found him deeply interested in India. He was writing a book on Mahatma Gandhi at that time. Then he said, "If you want to understand India, study Swami Vivekananda. In him everything is positive, nothing negative." That was a tremendous statement. It impressed on the mind of Romain Rolland to study Swami Vivekananda. He had not studied much about him and he started studying and the result is those wonderful books — *Life of Ramakrishna, Life of Vivekananda.* Both of whom he presented to the Western world as the splendid symphony of the universal soul—Ramakrishna-Vivekananda. That was the maturity of the renaissance movement starting from the beginning of the nineteenth century, ending with Swami Vivekananda, towards the end of the century.

Swamiji inspired the nation to become modern, to develop scientific attitudes, to wash away that evil of untouchability and other caste exclusiveness, to uplift women—all these things which we neglected for the last thousand years when our body politic was weak. All these Swamiji reminded us. This is how we can make India modern in this modern period. Particularly the common people. They have been neglected for centuries. In Vivekananda literature you find this wonderful spirit of humanity rousing the dignity of man, installing him in his high dignity as a human being. He has asked us to wipe off the blot that is on our society of neglected common people, neglect of women — all these must go. Some other sentences are tremendous both in his speeches as well as in his letters. In one of the letters from America to the people in India he writes, these upper classes of India, they have exploited our people, neglected them, millions of them. In that connection he says: "Little can you dream

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of the ages of tyranny—mental, moral and physical—that has reduced the image of God, that is man, to a mere beast of burden, the emblem of the Divine Mother, which is woman, to a slave to bear children, and life itself a curse."

That was Indian society in the nineteenth century. We have been developing like this for centuries together. The nation had lost its strength, its vigour, even the great spiritual teachings of the sages we had watered down into petty little village superstitions. Religion which was such a noble thing in the past ages taught by Upanishads, *Gita*, the Buddha, Sankaracharya and others, that religion became watered down. I often compare what is religion in India now or the last century. Even today many people understand religion, as some doing this, some little ritual, some ceremony. There is no stress on the spiritual growth of man, high character energy. This is the nature of our understanding because the energy of the mind is lost during the last few centuries. A jaded mind cannot understand the mighty philosophy which you find in Vedanta, in the *Gita*, etc. Swami Vivekananda said: "Can a mosquito understand the strength of a lion? Only an elephant can understand it." So we had a very small mind.

What is religion to many people? Even today I find even a scholar will go to Rishikesh, pay five rupees to a priest, catch hold of the tail of a cow to go to heaven. Many scholars will do that even today. Where is the great Vedanta? Where is the great teaching of the Buddha and what is this religion which we call our popular religion today? And therefore, Swamiji came to rouse us to an understanding of the true spirit of religion which is character-strengthening. He calls it man-making religion, man-making education, nation-building faith. He aroused the nation to this understanding of the great spiritual heritage of India — rational, universal, practical, unifying humanity — not only in India but in the rest of the world as well.

Some of the great utterances of his are highly inspiring for our people. We were sleeping for ages. He made us wake up from that sleep. His wonderful passage in his first lecture delivered on the soil of India was at Ramnad, near Rameswaram. Coming from America and Europe after four years of work there, he landed in Colombo, then Anuradhapura, then Jaffna, and finally landed on the Indian soil. This lecture he delivered in India and Ceylon. You get it as *Lectures from Colombo to Almora*, one of the best nation-building books we have in the modern period. In that opening lecture delivered on 25 January, 1897, he strikes this note of awakening to this gigantic nation of India, like a leviathan sleeping for ages, becoming politically a slave to every foreign

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conqueror. To that India he gave this message of awakening in the very opening para of that lecture. Here is that wonderful passage: "The longest night seems to be passing away, the sourest trouble seems to be coming to an end at last, the sleeping corpse appears to be waking up India — this motherland of ours — from her deep, long sleep. None can resist her any more, never is she going to sleep any more, no outward powers can hold her back any more for the infinite giant is rising to her feet."

In 1897 he uttered these words. Then reaching Madras he said we have confined our religion all to temples, images, etc. We have neglected man in our society. We couldn't see God in man though our teaching of Vedanta is : God is in every human being. Shri Ramakrishna himself taught us this profound truth. Every *jeeva* is Shiva, service of the *jeeva* is the worship of Shiva. We never cared for all these ideas. We concentrated only on temples, on images, etc., neglected human beings, exploited him and we thought we are religious. So, with this at the background, reaching Madras a few weeks later, he said, for the next fifty years let this be our keynote. This great Mother India — millions and millions of gods in the form of human beings — love them, serve them, worship them. Let all other vain gods disappear from our minds. That is the wonderful message that came to us which is Vedanta, as taught in the Upanishads and the *Gita*, as taught in the *Srimad Bhagavatam*. And the spirit of modern culture, the spirit of humanism, all that is what you call, consolidated in that great message he gave, a message of a human orientation concerned for man.

It is a beautiful passage in the teachings of Jesus where you find this: "You cannot love me whom you have seen. How can you love God whom you have not seen?" First love man, across over there, your neighbour, serve him, work with him, then you will understand the true idea of religion. Swamiji, therefore, gave that human orientation to our tremendous spiritual heritage so that they can build up a new society, based on human dignity, human freedom, human equality. These are great Vedantic ideas and fortunately they are the ideas that came to us from Western culture as well. That is the work that is being done today.

The nineteenth century gave us the philosophical and spiritual framework of how we have to build this nation. Great ideas came to us and what happened? Swami Vivekananda passed away in 1902. Within three years we found expression of his profound message in political action — rousing of the common people — awakening of Bengal. Men like Romain Rolland traced later

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political movements to the energy imparted by Swami Vivekananda. In that great message "Wake up India", there is great work to be done, you have to create a new culture, a new civilization, new human society here and that society, he said, will be a beautiful blending of the best of Western culture and the best of Indian culture. They have stressed man, we have stressed God. We shall see God in man and achieve a new type of culture here which is deeply spiritual on the one side, deeply humanistic on the other. That we have missed for centuries together. Millions of people we have treated like animals.

Swami Vivekananda characterised that record of India as the blot on our society. Today you call it casteism, untouchability. Today you have communal conflicts. So many evils are there. In Swamiji's time these things were brewing, and Swamiji took up this subject and threw light upon it. What we have to do as an awakened nation is to banish all these weaknesses that are there, and to create a progressive socio-political order. Immediately after came the political expression of this great spiritual idea. And the first thing that we needed was political freedom. How to shape our destiny in our own way? No foreign nation can shape our destiny. They are here for their own purpose. We are not their main aim. So the first expression of this great renaissance was fight for freedom. Gigantic personalities arose in the wake of this great renaissance of the nineteenth century. We had the Bengal agitation, Swadeshi agitation, then comes Tilak, then Gandhiji, then all the various political forces being strengthened and they are made to concentrate on political freedom. That is the great saga we had in the recent period.

Some of the generations of today are post-freedom generations but those who are older they can see what happened to India at that time. The whole nation rose—men, women, children—with tremendous spirit of sacrifice, spirit of love for the nation, and they struggled, they suffered and they achieved political freedom. It is in this period we produced men like Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Their leadership qualities, their tremendous patriotism, their courage, heroic mould — they have been the inspiration of this national movement and all these presided over by the tremendous personality, Mahatma Gandhi. He had a wonderful quality, absolute fearlessness and no hatred towards anybody. It is a rare quality. We have praised it in our ancient literature. In the *Gita* there is a beautiful sloka which represents in today's time Gandhiji's character as we saw it in our time: "*Yasmano udhyujateloko lokanudhyujate jayaha.*" "Who is my true devotee?" Krishna is asking. "That man who is not frightened by the world and who does not frighten the world, that man is

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my true devotee" Gandhiji exactly represented that spirit. He was so strong. None could frighten him. He was so gentle, nobody need get frightened by him. That is the quality of character we missed for centuries together except in a few saints and sages. Today it must become a universal trait of humanity in India. The heroic age of Indian history must be started once again. And so, in the modern period, we threw up heroic people. In every department they were heroic — whether it is politics, social reform, scientific research — everywhere. Batches and batches of great people appeared on the scene and the first fruit of their great work was this freedom that we achieved in 1947.

It is a great day, exactly 50 years after Swami Vivekananda's speech at Ramnad on 25 January, 1897, this country became free. Then came the great problem. What shall we do with this freedom? It is there we have yet to learn many more lessons from Swami Vivekananda and other great teachers. Freedom was a great achievement. We were all excited on that day. In fact I often speak to our people in various parts of India of 15 August, 1947. The whole nation was in ecstasy. Freedom came. Though it came with a tremendous evil of partition but yet it was freedom. We have got a chunk, the bigger part of India. We can build up the hundred millions and millions that are there. So let us hope we started with ecstasy but very soon the ecstasy vanished. People began to forget the nation, forget the people, became self-centred, simply money-making for oneself. All the evils that have come thereafter can be traced to this kind of attitude that came. We could not sustain that attitude of patriotic dedication. How many people suffered for freedom. But once freedom came we lost that idea. Why should I suffer now? Let me take the best of this. But what about the millions who are there.

Swamiji told us, "So long as the millions live in hunger and ignorance I hold every man a traitor who, having been educated at their expense, pays no heed to them." That was a great utterance. If you don't pay heed to the common people, and you have been educated at the cost of the State and you have become selfish, that is treason. We have got too many traitors in India. In one letter Swamiji wrote, "They alone live who live for others. The rest are more dead than alive." Before independence we had more live people. After independence we have more dead people, self-centred, not caring for the nation. So many of the evils we had during the last thousand years, which we just removed from our minds during the freedom struggle. those evils returned back to our nation. Smallness, pettiness and narrow attitudes — that

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all national attitudes began to disappear. Regional, caste, communal, linguistic—all these inequalities came in the modern period. But before that we had already consolidated this nation. It was all scattered in a hundred kinds of pieces of States.

It is there Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel had the greatest contribution to make. Freedom came, partition came, but India was a congeries of States scattered here and there. They had their own claims as Princes and here came our Vallabhbhai Patel to consolidate this nation, consolidate that freedom. He was served by very great administrators at that time. That was a great period of integrating this nation. The British left leaving everything to our use. Have we the wisdom? Have we the training —to build up the political structure of India? Politically we have been a failure, several times in our history. But Sardar Patel showed us that in politics also we can have farsight, foresight and tremendous wisdom. That is why that part of our history is so great. If we had continued in that spirit of consolidation we would have become much more progressive than what we are today. But he did his work, he consolidated this freedom that came to us. India became a unified nation.

In 1950 we gave ourselves a remarkable, progressive Constitution. That is a great work. The Constituent Assembly in which we had very distinguished people, great intellectuals, great patriots of all communities — we got a Constitution from that Constituent Assembly, and this was piloted by a remarkable personality, viz., Dr. Ambedkar. He is a remarkable personality of modern period. One who suffered so much from our society, its orthodoxy, its casteism, its untouchability, and yet he rose to the highest level of intellectual strength. And then came the generosity of men like Jawaharlal Nehru. Though Ambedkar did not take part in the freedom struggle, but once freedom came, Jawaharlal Nehru had a greatness of mind to invite him to take up this great work of piloting the great constitutional struggle in the Constituent Assembly and it was a wonderful combination of the best minds of India at that time. And he rose to the occasion, this great Ambedkar. We can never forget the greatness which is Ambedkar, as we don't forget the greatness which is Sardar Patel, the great Nehru and others.

So that is the time of gigantic personalities — everything great about them, nothing small, nothing petty — they spoke of man, they spoke of the nation, they spoke of the whole world. That is how we started our career as a Sovereign Democratic Republic from 26 January, 1950. The Constitution contains profound ideas. It reflects the spirit of the ancient Upanishads, the dignity

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of man, the unity of the nation, the freedom and equality of all human beings, equality of women, all these beautiful ideas are there, for the first time in a Constitution. I generally characterise the Indian Constitution as the new *smriti*. We have been governed by *smritis* in India for ages and *smritis* are very discriminatory. They speak ill of the untouchables, the lower class, even women. So much of discrimination you will find in the *smriti*. That *smriti* has been abolished. We have got this *smriti*. This Constitution where you have got a new *smriti* and our Indian tradition tells us that the *smriti* will remain for all time because it contains eternal spiritual truths, very progressive, dealing with unity of man, the equality of man, that is the spirit of *shruti*, viz., the Upanishads. But the *smritis* contain discriminatory ideas. According to orthodox tradition in India wherever there is a conflict between *shruti* and *smriti*, *smriti* has to go, *shruti* alone will remain.

Today we have accomplished that task. Our new *smriti*, the Constitution, is of the nature of the *shruti* in content. It recognises human dignity, human equality, human freedom, banishing all these untouchability and other things. That is the greatness of this *smriti* and the one who piloted it was the one who suffered most from the previous *smritis*, viz., Ambedkar. It is only an event that can happen in a society like India. In other countries it is difficult to have this kind of a phenomenon, that an untouchable becoming the pilot of a big constitutional process in India; and I call it, therefore, the Ambedkarsmriti. If Manusmriti, Yagyavalkyasmriti all these have inflicted discrimination on other people, here you have an Ambedkarsmriti where this great idea of equality is proclaimed. All the wisdom of India went into making of that Constitution. It has been provided with provisions of changing amendment whenever that is needed—not a rigid kind of a Constitution.

So, we have the Constitution. But what is the Constitution? It is just a piece of book, it is a promise, it is a hope. We have to translate it. It is there. We have not sueceeded to the extent we could have succeeded. That is the post-freedom story of our history. But the State we have established today has a uniqueness which we never had before, viz., it derives its sanction from the people of India. Till now our States were based on one Emperor, one military conqueror, strong person, may be indigenous, may be foreign — such States we had. They covered some part of India. People were all subjects. They had no particular part to play in these matters. But today for the first time in the five-thousand-year history of India we have established a Republican Democratic State which derives its sanction from us, the people of India. That

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is the language of the Constitution. Assembled in this Constituent Assembly, we, the people of India, give ourselves this Constitution for the unity of the nation, for the dignity of the individual. That is the language of the Constitution.

I wish every student studies the preamble and the fundamental rights portion of our Constitution and develop the will to translate these promises into social realities. That will is lacking today. That is why, in spite of all the great promises, we have not been able to implement many of them at all, because, after freedom people became a little cozy, a little comfortable, self-centred. The gigantic personalities who built up this Constitution and Jawaharlal Nehru, who established the firm base of our democracy, when they all went away, we are not able to find people who can strengthen this resolve of the people to translate ideas and visions into social realities. It is there we have failed, it is there we have to work harder to bring about this very change in our society, banishing of poverty, illiteracy, social exclusiveness, caste pride and superiority and the conflict arising therefrom. And above all communal conflicts.

These are the great problems that are facing us today. We are developing an industry. We are developing our political institutions. Our democracy has survived so many difficult situations. In fact among all the free nations we can say our democracy is quite strong. During the general elections you can see how many millions and millions of people go to vote. When I speak in America I often tell them that more than the total population of America will go to polls in Indian elections. What a tremendous thing it is—230 or 240 million people going for general elections to vote. That is India today—a gigantic political experiment. But what we lack today is that human concern, that patriotic dedication, that work efficiency, by which we shall be able to wipe the tear from every eye, as Gandhiji beautifully put it. That spirit must come to the nation today. Our idea of religion also must become practical, leading to character development, spiritual awakening, spiritual growth.

Religion has two dimensions, ethnical and scientific. Ethnical is the religion in which you are born. You have no say in the matter. Spiritual and scientific is what you seek ; what you choose is called science. Nobody is born in science, nobody is born as a physicist, or a chemist. You choose this subject. So in science you choose. In the science of religion also you choose. Then you grow spiritually. Whereas in ethnical religion you remain what you are. If you are selfish in the beginning you are selfish in the end. If you are petty-minded in the beginning, you are petty-minded in the end. A few do's and don'ts only you observe,

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the world of religion is merely ritual and ceremony. Man's development of character doesn't come along with this. That is why the stress has to come.

Shri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and others today stress this aspect of religion. Have you grown spiritually ? You go to a temple, you go to a church, you go to a mosque, you go to a Gurudwara, you go to any religious place, or you sit in meditation, beautiful. But after finishing it you ask this question : Have I grown spiritually ? That is the meaning of religion. The Divine in man must find manifestation. Out of that alone will come character, energy. That is what we are missing today in India since independence. We all deplore today the erosion of ethical and moral values, in our society. The amount of evil that has come to our society is immense. Is it for this that we achieved freedom ? So much of social malpractices, corruption, evil, etc. So the re-shaping of India in the modern period should be based upon those fundamental values, which alone make man really an individuality of dignity and glory. That is not there. If I can't wipe the tears of the people around me, what is my strength ? What is my humanity ?

It was Swami Vivekananda who first drew our attention to this weakness of our understanding of religion. He said, even if a dog is hungry in my country, my religion is to find food for that dog. We never thought in these terms before. Even if somebody is sick or starving in India, something is wrong with me, in my philosophy. That philosophy has to change. How to take in all others in my thinking. That is a wonderful new idea. We have to develop it. It is there in our spiritual literature. See God in man, love him, serve him. That is true religion. Meditate and discover him within you and also see him outside there. This was the teaching that we have in our ancient literature and in modern teachings from Shri Ramakrishna, Swamiji and others.

Therefore, this kind of acceleration of human development must come from a generation of this new energy of character. Character energy is a tremendous energy. Today the greatest problem in India is to develop high character. Money we have, many things we have, resources we have, but development is not commensurate with all these things. Compared to many countries like Japan, we have plenty of natural resources, we have got intelligence in our people. We should have been developing very fast. All this poverty should have gone long ago. All this illiteracy should have been vanished long ago. But we have not achieved it, because in spite of the other areas of development

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within us, we don't have that character energy, that alone can trigger all these into action. That is what we have to concentrate hereafter in the making of modern India.

Our India is taking shape but the people of India must become more and more concerned with each other — what we call today the concept of citizenship. The day we established our Republic, our status has gone up. We are no more subjects of an Empire. We are citizens of a free democracy. As citizens we have a social responsibility and national responsibility. We don't realise that responsibility today. We are irresponsible. When it comes to the nation, when it comes to the people, when it comes to the public good, we are nowhere. Our own good we know, our own welfare we know. That attitude has to completely change if we are to satisfy the requirements of the modern period of Indian history. We must become modern, in the true sense of the term. I am sorry to say, many people in India have a very wrong understanding of being modern. Using modern gadgets does not make us modern. In that case even the monkey and the bear in Delhi zoo will be more modern than you and I. They get air-conditioned accommodation. That doesn't make a man modern.

There is a modern mind. First scientific, rational; second intensely human, humanistic, tremendous concern for others. Everyone must ask this question. Why after 39 years of freedom 750 million people are so poor and backward? Why so many millions are illiterate? It is my responsibility. That attitude must come to our people. That is the legacy of the freedom struggle. All those who fought for our freedom, had this wonderful idea. That we have quietly forgotten. We began to take the fruits of freedom, never sharing it with others. This is the problem that faces us today. We have the evils of caste and communalism even today. In spite of such great leaders coming in the past ages, we have so many pockets of feudalistic thinking, caste-ridden attitude, caste conflicts and communal conflicts. The most shameful thing in free India today is caste conflicts, communal conflicts, apart from bribery, corruption, other social malpractices. These are a blot on a free nation. We can't develop based upon these weaknesses that are there. Our people must develop tremendous humanistic passion.

Communal differences will be there in every society. We are provided for it in our culture and in our philosophy. As I said we developed a culture in India based upon the vision of unity in diversity. We never destroy diversity. We did not want mere uniformity. We want this diversity. Diversity makes for richness and in the diversity there is a thread of unity as well. We have

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built up a culture based on that. It has gone on for all these five thousand years. Even today, therefore, we must stress the concept of diversity. Every religion, every culture, every language has a place here. But they should not become a means of conflict, destroying the unity of the nation. This wisdom must come to us today. Particularly, in the caste conflict area, we have to get a new education.

In fact, in many of my lectures I have referred to this. We are educated people and we all need a re-education. A re-education with respect to our concern for the people. How to make us the servants of the nation? That is the great contribution of Vivekananda literature. He will ignite the humanist passion in the hearts of our people. Those who have studied Vivekananda literature thoroughly, they will love this country with a passion which will be rare in our history. Mahatma Gandhi said it in a lecture at the Belur Math, headquarters of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, when he visited that place in 1921, on Vivekananda's birthday. He said, by reading Swami Vivekananda's works, "My love for India became thousand-fold. I appeal to you young people who have come to this Belur Math to take something of that inspiration from where Swami Vivekananda lived and worked." Now that spirit must come to us today. A love for the common man, irrespective of caste, creed or colour. Build up India based upon that unifying vision. It is young people that must re-educate themselves in this field. It is re-education as we call it. We are educated in colleges, we get a degree, we get a job, we forget everything else. We are only concerned with ourselves. That passion for the people, for the nation, that has become weakened a good deal.

Therefore, in the making of new India every one of us has a part to play. Till now we were passive subjects. We have to become active, dynamic citizens of free India. We always say that Government will do. What about myself? I have a great contribution to make. I am a proud citizen of India. Very often when I speak to secretarial staff, in various parts of India, I find there is no concern for the people, no papers move because they are not concerned. It doesn't concern them. When it concerns them, they are very active. When it concerns others, they become absolutely careless and that is an evil we have to fight against. We have to have more of public spirit, more of concern for others—what Swami Vivekananda called, the spirit of service. Renunciation and service are the twin ideals of India. Intensify her in those channels, the rest will take care of itself. This is a profound utterance in Vivekananda literature. "*Tyaga* and *Seva*"

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this little "I" must go. In a citizen the little "I" should become a big "I" because of the sense of responsibility. As a citizen you are responsible for the good or bad that takes place in India. As a subject you are not. When the British left, you are no more a subject. You are a citizen.

Therefore, this *tyaga* and its concomitant Seva must go together. That is a great work that demands our attention today. Then we can set fire to all these—caste conflict, communal conflict, all these evils that are there. This land is a land of harmony. It must be made once again the land of harmony. Political changes have to come. Political parties also must discuss these ideas. particularly with respect to communalism. It is an evil specially connected with India. We have many communities, many religions, many many sects. For thousands of years, they have lived in peace here. Why this trouble now? We have to make necessary political changes.

One of the important political changes we have to make and the truth which we have to realise today is that our secular State and communal political parties can never go together. A secular State should have only secular political parties at all levels—Parliament, Assembly, Panchayats, everywhere. Because every candidate to an election must be able to represent the interest of all the communities in that area. Then only our secular State is truly secular. Today it is not. A secular-minded national individual has no opportunity to rise up to the top today, because of the wrong political policies we follow. So, it is for the political parties to discuss this subject—how to make our State truly secular by delinking the political forces from communal and religious affiliations. That is the most important work we have today to achieve—national integration.

When Sardar Patel integrated the States, he was only setting in motion a particular activity to integrate the whole nation. He wanted an integrated nation in India. We can feel oneness with each other. I can trust you to represent me because we are all fellow-citizens of the same political and social interest. Why not a Muslim represent Christian and Hindu social interest? This attitude must come to us. Then only our secularism becomes true, our democracy becomes strong. Religion also becomes pure by delinking politics from religion. Politics makes for selfishness, violence, all sorts of evil.

Our religion must become pure, building character in us. Then only religions come to their own selves. Today religions also have become as Swami Vivekananda said, 'lifeless mockeries'—

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that is what he said. In the name of religion I can become a devil even and yet we call it religion. So, to purify our religion we need to separate politics from religion. Political life must be beyond all these sectarian religions. It is a national attitude. In this way we have to purify our public life that must be coming from thinking, from discussion. We are a democracy. We don't want to cut the head of anybody, but we want to educate the head for national attitudes. That is what we have to engage ourselves in the remaining years of this great century.

This has been a great century, century when great scientific discoveries came, century when colonialism was ended. India became free. Many nations became free. By the end of the century we must be able to say we have built up an integrated nation, banished, conflicts, communal and caste, from our country, banished proverty, illiteracy from our country. All these can be done only by an awakened humanity. It is that awakened humanity that must come from hereafter onwards so that we take full part in nation-building. That is the meaning of democracy.

Swami Vivekananda has given a beautiful message to our people in a beautiful sentence. He says : "Teach yourselves, teach everyone his real nature. Call upon the sleeping soul, and see how it awakes. Power will come, glory will come, goodness will come, purity will come. Everything great and glorious and excellent will come when this sleeping soul is roused to self-conscious activity." Physical science deals with physical possibilities. This science deals with human possibilities. What are the possibilities hidden in that human child? Vedanta says infinite possibilities are hidden in every human being. Let us face ourselves on that concept of man—a centre of infinite energy, unfolding that energy, developing high character—then will come the flowering of India. Great saints, great sages, great intellectuals, great scientists, great humanists will appear in this country. Great artists will appear once again in this country when the sleeping soul is roused to self-conscious activity. That is called practical Vedanta by Swami Vivekananda. We have that possibility today. We can write a most glorious chapter in India's long history. We are creating history today.

Swami Vivekananda created history. Gandhiji created history. We have to create history today. That is the beauty of modern period. We never had this opportunity before. Today we have all the 750 million people of India who can be well fed, can be

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educated ; all distinctions between man and man can be eliminated, if people are awake. It is that awakening that is the central message of Vedanta as given by Swami Vivekananda. I quote his wonderful sentence which is an adaptation of the famous verse of the *Kathopanishad : Uttishtatha. jagratha, prapyavaran nibodhatha* — " Rise, awake and stop not till the glory is reached."

The Noise has its own Rhythm

DEVENDRA SHARMA " INDRA "

Rendered into English from Hindi by Dr. Ravi S. Varma

The noise has its own rhythm
Whispered the evening into my ears
it's a river,
shape its course as you wish
or leave it on its own
for the sands to swallow.
The wilting flower
falls on the dust
and exudes a lasting smell.
Lonesome on a crowded stage
it breathes into the ears of silence
and the lingering echo preserves on and on
amidst the leaves rustling here
and the winter storms raving there
the noise swells high and low
in a well-measured cadence.
True, the noise has its own rhythm!

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LAL BAHADUR SHASTRI

K. ISWARA DUTT

"The leadership which democracy requires is a leadership that is itself democratic, a leadership of persuasion and friendly guidance, and not a leadership of force and domination. It is the leadership, not of dictators nor of spell-binders, but of those who seek the collaboration of the led."

— A. BARRATT

Few men in history were more widely loved when alive or more widely mourned on their death, than India's Lal Bahadur Shastri. It was also his singular distinction in life to have achieved something extraordinary while he was true to type as the proverbial common man. Here was a rare being — one who, with no adventitious aids and utterly devoid of personal ambition, rose to great heights by sheer gravitation, as it were, and passed out of mortal ken, after having established himself as the undisputed leader of his nation and as an apostle of goodwill and peace on the international plane.

If his rise to India's premiership as Nehru's successor, registered one of democracy's greatest triumphs, his sudden death at Tashkent in the wake of an historic agreement, tended to highlight his supreme concern for international values and peace on earth. It is one of history revelations how a man so unambitious and so unassuming and of such mediocre gifts as Lal Bahadur could have at all touched greatness. If yet he did, that too with an effortless ease, it was all because of his simple life and selfless service. His was a life full of lessons to posterity.

The passing of Jawaharlal Nehru on May 27, 1964 set the world by its ears with intense curiosity about the succession — an issue which had long been debated in his own lifetime with his nonchalance, if not unconcern, in stubborn evidence. By a process of elimination it was generally believed that of all

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his colleagues, Mr. Lal Bahadur stood the best chance. And when Jawaharlal Nehru, in the wake of his near-collapse at Bhubaneswar, sought to summon Mr. Lal Bahadur to his aid from the vasty Kamaraj deeps, it seemed that the dice was rather purposefully loaded in his favour. When ultimately the Congress Parliamentary Party had to elect its leader for the " crown of thorns ", Mr. Lal Bahadur's potential rivals were put to fight, by *vox popupli* (the voice of the people).

It was more than a mere political triumph : it was a moral victory for one who, in a party where every second man was controversial, with a sense of natural ease, rose above contention and made himself the most acceptable. He had a firm hold on the organisation, without ever passing for a boss. He had varied ministerial experience. At the centre, he worked in close, indeed intimate, colleagueship with Jawaharlal Nehru and enjoyed his confidence. Above all, more than anyone else in the offing, he was instinctively trusted to go the Nehru way, without deviating by a hair-breadth from the paths laid down by the departed leader. More than of the party, he was the choice of the people.

Few men achieved so much with more obvious limitations or less spectacular gifts. May be, in appearance he was not arresting, but he was

> A square-set man and honest, and his eyes
> An outward sign of all the warmth within.

And he was a man of deeper qualities than his urban appearance suggested. Without any loss of his modesty of bearing he carried himself not only with ease and dignity but with a natural graciousness that sprang from a kindly heart. While he was not brilliant, he had a quick grasp of things, a keen sense of understanding and a certain clarity of mind.

Mr. Lal Bahadur was never known to manoeuvre for any position or use his undoubted influence to satisfy personal ambition or humour private grudge. As in the case of the Canadian Premier, Mackenzie King, things came his way. And having always succeeded in almost everything he had put his hand to and grown equal to his opportunities, he steadily advanced in stature.

Mr. Lal Bahadur had neither social advantages nor academic distinctions. Even for a politician, his integument was singularly thin. Glamour of any kind he had none while by the side of Nehru he was almost lamentably pedestrian. As a speaker he was mediocre and as a writer negligible. Cast in no heroic mould, he was seldom swayed by the vision beatific that seized one with a

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sense of frenzy over the gleam on the far horizons. He was emphatically not cut out for the role of a Colossus. Yet...

Seldom had nature and events made a man a nation's leader out of more modest material or (as Omar Khayyam would have it) common substance. Least demonstrative of politicians, Mr. Lal Bahadur was plain to the point of homeliness ; indeed, he was extraordinarily homespun. His greatest asset was his freedom from pretension. He, however, knew more than he professed to know. His mind was, if limited, very orderly and sound while his outlook was sober, even enlightened. His public spirit was unimpeachable and his personal integrity unassailable. He had a horror of intrigue ; he loathed dusty strife. He worked for harmony all around. He was a born smoother. But he was conciliatory without being necessarily compromising, and he could put up a stiff back when he felt he must. There was universal testimony to his higher qualities as a statesman. He was "balanced, practical and entirely dependable," like Sir Robert Peel in his day. His unruffled demeanour, imperturbability and cool brain were precious possessions which any Prime Minister in the world could envy.

If few had his generosity of mind in pouring oil on troubled waters—or administering soothing syrup to frayed nerves—fewer had his genius for handling tangled threads or unravelling difficult knots. Again and again Mr. Lal Bahadur proved to be the rescue man for the Congress party in a crisis and sometimes its very life-belt when it was in her waters. The greatest thing about him was the goodwill that he earned even beyond the party, by his self-effacing service to the country and his modesty and humility which became legendary even in his own day.

Few men in our annals had within recent years so handsomely risen to eminence with less self-propulsion or more detachment. There was, indeed in him, a touch of the noble Lord Grey of Fallodon whose political career was described by Herbert Sidebotham as " the expression not of ambitions, nor even of views, so much as of character ". His merits were more of the heart than of the head and his good nature was infectious. He was neither a demagogue nor a doctrinaire. His power of persuasion was compelling because his words were as serviceable as his motives are disinterested. He wanted nothing that the other man could share, out of the common good he worked for. If he, however, lacked the capacity to inspire the multitude to heroic deeds, he had a singular capacity to win their confidence by his devotion to the country and dedicated service.

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Mr. Lal Bahadur, truth to tell, started on his Prime Ministership under one stupendous handicap. He came on the scene after a giant among men. Indeed, he had till then grown, so to say, under the shadow of a superman, with little inclination and less opportunity for taking any initiative. It was none too enviable a setting for the ascendancy of a political leader who found himself entrusted with the responsibility of negotiating a huge vessel, tossed on the high seas, to happy shores, smiling insecular sweetness and socialist plenty. He may not be a daring pilot but there was no more skilful a steersman.

It was the nation's good luck that there was a man who could be trusted to keep his head cool and hand steady, in the roughest of weathers, as was evidenced during the dark days of the Indo-Pakistan conflict. With his horror of strife, he never wanted it or liked it. But when he felt he was dragged into it, he was resolved to carry his country through it with fortitude and courage. And he did carry the nation, so to say, on his shoulders, by his moving appeals to its better sense.

On one occasion he said :

> The supreme need of the hour is national unity — unity not of the word but of the heart.

On another :

> This is a testing time...Be united, feel the pride of belonging to a great nation, carry out your tasks with true dedication.

And he propounded too a most sensible doctrine when, addressing a mass gathering, he said :

> It is not an army alone that fights a war but a whole people. The real strength of an army depends on the extent to which the nation is behind it.

If in her deadly conflict with Pakistan, India stood as one man, it was not a little due to the fact that she had at the helm of affairs a man who was the very soul of sincerity and who was never prepared to lower her flag or betray her interests. It was Mr. Lal Bahadur's unique privilege to have upheld the cause of India in war and also led her in the field of peace. Tashkent was his crowning victory. It raised him to the level of an international statesman. But alas, ere he returned home with the laurels thickening on his brow, he died of heart attack too suddenly. It seemed that the very gods were jealous of him. There was, however, the consolation that Mr. Lal Bahadur died at the height of his fame.

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There was universal sorrow because of the goodwill he so instinctively evoked wherever he went or was known. A devotcd disciple of Gandhiji, a true friend of Jawaharlal Nehru, a great gentleman in public life in the line of Rajendra Babu and a dedicated servant of the nation and of humanity, Lal Bahadur left behind him an imperishable memory.

NOSTALGIA

UMANATH BHATTACHARYA

After flowing through a good many leagues when
The river's nearing its mouth you have come to
Instill in me a tingling yearning, O dear ;
Where have you been so long ?
How can I retrace my steps to the inaccessible
Source uphill to the springhead of youth ?

'tis the Act five ;
The drama is nearly played
And the curtain's about to fall
Why you propose to enact it anew right
From the prologue ?
When the image is brought to the riverside
For immersion wherefore sing you the Advent*
Songs and beat the melody of invocation ?
Bringing down the fading picture from the gallery
Will you be able to innovate it ?
Reverse, who can, the course of time ?

*Advent Songs — During the Durgapuja festival these religious songs are sung in Bengal welcoming the Divine Mother like the Christmas carols in the Christendorm.

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SRINIVASA RAMANUJAN

The Mathematical Genius

Prof. K. R RAJAGOPALAN

The time is sometime at the beginning of this century. In a class of eleven or twelve-year olds, the teacher is explaining the concept of division. "If three fruits are divided among three boys, each gets one fruit; if 5 fruits are divided among five, then each gets one. So, if a number is divided by itself, the quotient is always 1." Quite ordinary! So far, yet. Now jumps up a dark-complexioned, stocky boy asking, "Sir, if zero mangoes are divided among zero boys, would each get one?" The teacher is upset, naturally, and admonishes him, "Do not ask silly questions; zero has no value and so no division of fruits is possible." The matter does not end there either. The boy persists, "Sir, zero *has* value; when you put one zero to the right of 3, we get 30; two zeroes gives us 300. So how can you say that zero has no value?" The discussion must have stopped there, as the teacher had no reply to that. This incident happened in Kumbhakonam, a pilgrim centre in Tamil Nadu, wherein there are a large number of ancient Siva and Vishnu temples; and a Kumbhamela called "Mahamakham" is held once in twelve years.

Another classroom scene at college level, fifteen years or so later. A British professor is working out a fairly tough problem on the blackboard. There is an Indian student who tells the teacher that he has committed an error; also adds that the problem could be worked out more easily. The professor is startled, asks superciliously the student to come and exhibit his "superior knowledge." There are whispers and derisive jeers from the classmates also. But the dark, stodgy Indian, walks unruffled to the board as if he did not notice all these, and solves the problem in fewer steps!

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In both cases, the student was Srinivasa Ramanujan—fondly called by his mother and friends as "Chinnaswamy." Srinivasa Ramanujan, one of the greatest mathematicians that this country has produced, and — as has recently been stated at a seminar in honour of his centenary in U. S. — one of the great names among world mathematicians also, was born at Erode on December 22, 1887. His centenary year would hence be from 22-12-'86 to 21-12-'87.

The date 22, is the product of the only even prime number 2 and the first two-digit prime number 11. (Ramanujan's special interest was in the theory of prime numbers.) He was born in the Tamil month of Margazhi, a month which is supposed to be the "most superior" of all the months. (Lord Krishna says in the *Bhagavadgeeta* that He is Margasirsha among months.) The year of birth, according to the Indian cycle of sixty years, was Sarvajit, which means "all-conquering". The day was Thursday, "Guruwara." (Guru, meaning the biggest. Jupiter (Guru) is the biggest of all planets.) Since the Visishtadwaitic philosopher Ramanujacharya was also born on a Thursday and since this family were Vaishnavaite by persuasion, the parents named the child as Ramanujan. His father's name was Srinivasan. By standards of those years Ramanujan should be considered fairly tall, being five and half feet in height (165 cms).

If Ramanujan showed his precocity in mathematics at a fairly early age, Gauss (1777-1855) is known to have exhibited his extraordinary powers of calculation even at an earlier age of three! His father was working on the wage bill of the labourers under his charge. The child Gauss was looking over the figures and found a mistake in the calculations, wihch was duly rectified.

The infiuence of the father on Ramanujan appears to be very slight, while that of his mother was deep and abiding. She was herself quite knowledgeable in astrology and the Puranas; she was also a very devout Bhakta of Lord Narasimha of Namakkal and Namagiri Devi. Namakkal, a small town in Salem District, is famous for the Pallava style of rock-cut temple of Lord Narasimha, the fourth man-lion incarnation of Vishnu; and also for the larger-than-life statue of the supreme devotee Anjaneya who stands in mighty grandeur with folded hands looking at his Lord Narasimha, with the sky alone as roof. Chinnaswamy inherited his love of the epics and the devotion to the Lord from his mother and throughout his life was quite a religious person. Many times during dreams, he used to get visions of scrolls of mathematics before his eyes and would, on waking up, try to write them in his note-books.

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He had few friends in his early life, being more interested in working out mathematics rather than playing with his classmates or children of the same age group. But he used to assist many of his fellow-pupils in getting their difficulties solved in tackling "hard" problems. When he was in the eighth class, he had mastered Loney's Trigonometry which is taught at the undergraduate level even today. Some college students also used to seek his assistance for their doubts in mathematics. This type of giving "tuitions" stood him in good stead in later years when he *had* to make money to meet the Spartan needs of himself and family.

Ramanujan's introduction to higher mathematics might have begun when he secured a copy of Carr's "Synopsis of elementary results in pure and applied mathematics" published in 1880 in England. This is the first of Carr's two books and contained merely the statements of more than five thousand results in many branches of mathematics. Ramanujan appears to have been influenced very much by this book, because, he followed the same pattern of writing only the *results* he found in his note-books. He has never given any explanation or hint as to how he arrived at them.

His educational career can be briefly given. He passed his matriculation examination in first class in 1903 from Kumbbakonam and so became eligible for a scholarship to join the F. A. class. He failed in that class, as he could not cope up with the history of Greece and Rome which was part of the course. After sometime he again tried the same examination at Pachaiappa's College, Madras, and again failed in 1907. Here ended his formal education when he was twenty years old.

In the meantime, as was the custom of those days, Ramanujan was married to Janakiammal (11 years old). The wedding was arranged by the mother only, and the father refused to attend even the wedding ceremony.

For the next three or four years, Ramanujan tried his best to secure a decent job which would fetch him and his family a decent living. He went from place to place, to Madras and to the far off Visakhapatnam. But to little avail. He managed to give tuition to a few students and lived with his friends for sometime.

During all this while, he kept up his interest in mathematics deriving more and more results and meticulously writing them in his note-books. He showed some of them to a number of professors of mathematics in the various colleges of Madras and

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other places also. He met Prof. Ross of Madras Christian College (it was situated then in the city of Madras) but nothing came out of this meeting too. He met the founder-president of the Indian Mathematical Society, who encouraged him to write out his results more neatly, giving all the intervening steps. His first research paper on "Some properties of Bernoulli's numbers" was published in December 1911 in the Journal of the Indian Mathematical Society. Perhaps this would be the first case of a research paper in the 20th century in mathematics, written by a person who did not have even undergraduate education.

This paper, perhaps, formed a turning point in his life. This paper was noticed by some professors one of whom gave him a recommendation letter. With this assistance, Ramanujan was able to secure a temporary clerical post in the Accountant General's Office, Madras, in 1912, where he worked for a month or two. Later, he got another clerical post in the Madras Port Trust, where he worked from March 1912 to April 1913. From May onwards, upto March of next year, he was the first research scholar in mathematics at the University of Madras, where he submitted three quarterly reports as needed by the university. He left for England at the invitation of Prof. G. H. Hardy on 17th March 1914 and spent the next five years there working with such well-known mathematicians as Hardy and Littlewood. He fell ill and, because of that, returned to Madras, India, in April 1919. He never recovered from that dogged illness and finally succumbed to the dreaded tuberculosis on 26th April 1920. He thus lived for the short span of 32 years 4 months and 4 days.

Troubles and Travails

Ramanujan did have a very hard time, finding it difficult even to make both ends meet on many an occasion. He met quite a few "mathematicians" but none really helped. In facing such situations, Ramanujan is not unique. Many a famous mathematician also has had to face similar, if not more, poignant situations. A few examples might suffice. Laplace (1749-1827) went to D'Alembert with a recommendation letter, but the latter would not even see him. Of course, Laplace wrote to him later giving him some of the results in mechanics which he had found. Now D'Alembert had no hesitation to offer the post of professor of mathematics at the Military School of Paris. Ramanujan also wrote a letter enclosing some of his results to Prof. Hardy, who strived his best to give Ramanujan a scholarship at the University of Madras itself, before he could arrange for Ramanujan to go over to England to work directly under him.

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Both Legendre and Cauchy did not properly evaluate the work of Abel (1802-1829) and so he suffered from poverty. Later, another mathematician Hermite opined that "Abel has left something for other mathematicians to keep them busy for 500 years." Galois (1811-1832) was another to die young and in difficulties. He too failed in the entrance examination twice—a case of "a candidate of superior intelligence being lost with an examiner of inferior intelligence." Cauchy lost the paper that Galois submitted and Poisson perfunctorily read through it and pronounced it as "being incomprehensible." Galois died in a duel, absolutely frustrated with his life. He is reported to have written: "If a carcase is needed to arouse people, I will donate mine!" Both Abel and Galois died in their 'Twenties.

Just as Ramanujan, quite a few other mathematicians were also born of humble parents and had no mathematical "lineage" on either side. Mention could be made of Laplace and Gauss in this connection.

His Mathematical Output

In a general article like this, it would not be possible to mention higher mathematics. But without mathematics, Ramanujan would be nowhere. One could mention that he wrote in all twenty-eight papers in various journals in India and abroad over a period of seven years from 1911-1919. Apart from these, he submitted three quarterly reports to the Madras University which were "rediscovered" only recently. These saw the light of day when B. C. Berndt edited them with details and explanations and published them in 1985 under the title "Ramanujan's note-books — Part I". These contain results which have been proved in a fairly rigorous manner. Berndt remarks, "It is rather remarkable that Ramanujan's formulas are invariably correct even though his methods are generally without a sound theoretical foundation." His amazing insights enabled him to determine when his formal arguments led to bonafide formulas and when they did not."

We shall only give the properties of Ramanujan's number 1729.

$1729 = 1^3 + 2^3 \quad 9^3 + 10^3$

$1+7+2+9 = 19$ and 19 is a factor of 1729

$1729 = 19 \times 91$ (note reversal of digits)

$1729 = 10^3 + 25^2 + 10^2 + 2^3$

Using only three of the four digits excluding 2, an even number, we get 17. 71, 79, 97 which are all prime numbers.

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He is supposed to have left behind him three note-books, full of results (on the model of Carr's book referred to earlier). He used to carry them wherever he went. Hardy sent one note-book of Ramanujan to the Madras University after his death. This was transcribed neatly by one T. A. Satakopan, lecturer in mathematics of Madras Christian College and was again sent to Prof. Watson in England who delivered a series of lectures on Ramanujan's works at the London Mathematical Society. It contained 134 pages systematically arranged into sixteen chapters, and the rest of 80 pages contained miscellaneous heterogeneous material. Satakopan's copy contained 356 foolscap pages. Another set of four volumes were copied by Watson into 288 pages of his close handwriting and contained 21 chapters systematically arranged and some thirty pages of heterogeneous material. They, together, contained some three to four thousand theorems. Ramanujan's note-books (two of them) were issued in a facsimile edition by the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Bombay, in 1957 under the editorship of K. Chandrasekharan. The third note-book remained untraced for a long time. Recently (in the 'Eighties), an American mathematician is reported to have come across this book among the effects of an English mathematician when, after his death, the books were being gone through.

Quite a prodigious effort considering that Ramanujan had to pass through trying times when he wrote these note-books. Many of his results are being worked upon even now, during this centenary year; more mathematicians would be engaged in this task.

From a quick survey done upto 1940, it was found that 104 papers had been published on what Ramanujan had done in journals in India and abroad.

A Few Anecdotes

Ramanujan was quite fond of listening to religious discourses and witnessing street-dramas or Terukkoothus. He never bothered about walking a few miles for such purposes. He was a traditionalist sporting the Kudumi or tuft, wearing the "tenkalai" Namam on his forehead and going to the Sarangapani (Lord Vishnu in the reclining form) temple and other temples.

He had to move the tuft of hair, and wear Western clothes including waist-coat, tie, socks, shoes and a hat. He waited till his wife and mother left for Kumbhakonam and then only (so as not to hurt his mother's sentiments) he had his head cropped. When he sent a copy of his photograph in Western clothes to his mother, she could not recognise him at all at first.

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He was quite fond punning on words. When he was shifted to Chetpet, a suburb of Madras, he is reported to have said, "Now everything will be over quickly" (Chetpat). He died in Chetpet. His relatives were thinking of taking him to Tanjavur for possible recovery, when Ramanujan refused to go there saying it was "tan+za+ur" i. e., a place where he would die. "Why bother about death; it has the same number of letters as birth—five letters each." (In Tamil and in English both the words birth and death have five letters each.)

His wife, who was quite young, asked him in her naivete to take her with him to England so that she could cook his food and look after him. Ramanujan, with his tongue in the cheek, told her that it would be very difficult for him to look after her as she, with her good looks and young age, would be carried away by the Englishmen over there!

The final words of his mother to him as he made preparations to sail were—"Do not lean out of the windows. You may fall into the sea." (There were no 'bars' in the windows of railway compartments then and so, such advice would invariably be given to youngsters when they boarded a train and were travelling without an elderly escort.)

The manager of the Madras Port Trust, Narayana Iyer, became quite fond of Ramanujan and the two spent many an evening and night together in his house in Triplicane. Narayana Iyer was quite fascinated with the slate on which Ramanujan worked out his problems. When Ramanujan left for England, Narayana Iyer requested (and got) permission to keep his slate as a memento. It appears that it is still preserved by the grandson, a namesake.

We shall end this short article with a few of the encomiums showered on him during his life and after his death by great mathematicians.

"...his name will become one of the greatest in the history of mathematics..." Prof. Neville in his letter to the Registrar recommending Ramanujan for a scholarship to go abroad.

Hardy had rated all mathematicians on the basis of *pure talent* on a scale from zero to hundred. Hardy gives himself a rating of 25. Littlewood (a fellow-collaborator of Hardy and Ramanujan) a rating of 30, Hilbert 80 and Ramanujan 100.

"Ramanujan is ..one superlatively great mathematician whom India has produced in the last 1000 years"—Neville in 1941 quoted in *Nature* (1942).

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" Ramanujan is the greatest mathematician of this century. "— Julian Huxley.

" I learnt more from him than he from me. I would equate his genius only with those of Jacobi and Euter. " — Hardy.

" Ramanujan was a gift of God to the mathematical world. "— —E. T. Bell

We, the believers of God in India, would wholeheartedly endorse the last statement.

THE BODY

Dr. V. RAMA MURTHY

The sagging body
Refuses to listen
It is curved or potty
Or piecemeal
Put it straight
It falls sideways
Put it down
It is upside down
Gather it up
It spills all over.

The hapless thing
Has no concern
For what you will
It is a discardable appendage.

That seems to say:
Death at forty is perhaps good
As the mind and body then
Are of equal age.

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The Missing "Mother" in Shakespeare

O. M. GOPALA RAO

Enough and more has been said and written on Shakespeare and his works and yet the immortal bard continues to stimulate his students and enthuse his worshippers alike with ever-refreshing thoughts and reflections on his plays and characters. Louis B. Wright of the Folger Library strikes a note of despair on the subject of Shakespearean study. He says :

"The field of Shakespearean criticism today is so vast and has such a ramification of specialized topics, from aesthetic appreciation to Freudian analysis, that non-specialists, literary scholars, much less other folk, find it difficult to sort out the significant from the trivial."

Necessarily the student of Shakespeare has to lean very heavily on the great master's works themselves, while consulting a few eminent and acknowledged authorities on Shakespearean drama like Bradley, Dowden, Herford and Dover Wilson and their like in more recent times.

One cannot hope or claim to be any more original in discussing Shakespeare, while much that may be interesting or even intriguing is stumbled upon by a close and discerning study of his works. When Ruskin makes the sweeping observation that Shakespeare has no heroes but only heroines, it has not merely remained an energetic expression of a point of view or of a perspective, but has come to be a highly interesting topic of debate and discussion, a debate that may never end.

If in a similar strain one were to maintain that Shakespeare has no mothers, but only fathers, the statement equally sweeping may deserve some consideration. A quick perusal of the plays reveals to us the interesting fact that Shakespeare has not given mothers to almost all his heroines in comedies, tragedies and romances. Even the few mothers for the heroes or young men are not fully developed characters, not even sizable sketches, with

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the possible exception of Gertrude in *Hamlet*, Tamora, in *Titus Andronicus*, Volumnia in *Coriolanus*, and lady Capulet, the only exception where young women are concerned, who is hardly recognisable as a character. These mothers do play some part in the plays but not the roles typical of motherhood.

Before we deal with the exceptions referred to, we have every reason to be surprised at the conspicuous omission of the role of a mother in the great majority of his plays, wherein the feminine fortunes of the young loves fluctuate between exhilerating adventures and helpless frustration and tragedy. Shakespeare who has not left unplumbed every facet and fact of human situation and emotion, strangely enough, left out of his purview the essential relation and the most normal and profound influence of a mother on those young women, who get themselves so much involved, with a good deal of initiative and courage, in the plays, as to warrant, if not to justify, the observation of Ruskin.

Even from the earliest comedies to the later Romances, the heroines are mostly young ladies, whose amorous adventures are both necessary and possible, handicapped as they are by the absence of their mothers and having been conditioned to dwell in a world mainly of men, exposed to temptations and trials, mostly of their own making.

In his later comedies, Shakespeare has provided for consultations and confidences for his heroines, lady friends of their own age, though sometimes different in temperaments and attitudes. To this category belong those friendly pairs of Rosalind and Celia, Hermia and Helena, Hero and Beatrice, Sylvia and Julia and Portia and Nerissa. Some of them are close cousins too. Whatever be the solace they can offer, the sacrifice they can do, they cannot be substitutes to the mother, who in the conception of all civilised world, is the manifestation of the ideal womanhood. Considering the way they are thrown helplessly into each others company, and together seeking sanctuaries in forests and love in labours, one only feels that a timely word or gesture of a mother to their fathers or even to themselves, would have saved them from the anguish of adventurous love and from a forest of troubles.

Yet there are other heroines who do not have even this comforting company of a cousin or a friend and who perforce depend on their own instinct of selection and self-preservation. The moment they fall in love, more often at first sight, they are inexorably carried away by the logic of their love and, of course, by the arms of their lovers. They remain helplessly and totally

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at the mercy of their men. They are no Hippolytas or Cleopatras, with age to chasten and experience to guide.

Shylock's only daughter Jessica is all youthful exuberance and the very spirit of love; and she is to languish in a home where the father is coldly divided between his ducats and his daughter, where she is practically plying the household chores like Miss Agnes in *David Copperfield*, confined in the darkness of a cheerless and affectionless home, which is no home. Let alone love, even for a spell of fresh breeze and light, Jessica would jump right into the outstretched arms of any young man. What a vacuum for one so young and spirited, is the void of an understanding mother!

Portia is a little sober among these youthful loves. A lady of considerable affluence, and fairer than the word fair, Portia is reputed to be wise for her years. This wisdom is sustained by an implicit faith in her father's superior wisdom. A lady like Portia can, not only get along in any situation, but can help others to wriggle out of tight corners. She is an exceptional young woman, who does not allow herself to be swept off her feet by the currents of youthful passion. The presence or absence of the mother in her case does not make any material difference.

We can practically leave out of consideration the history plays, since they are largely men's plays. Constance in *King John* is a sketchy role of a mother fighting for her son Arthur with a hysterical passion. Though her portrayal has been much admired, next to those of John, Arthur and the Bastard, Shakespeare has not given her the stature of a queen Katharine in *Henry VIII*. Even here the relationship is that of mother and son. Katharine in *Henry VIII*, is a fully drawn portrait. Dr. Johnson said that "the genius of Shakespeare comes in and goes out with Katharine." She is invested with queenly dignity and touched with the heroic and tragic. The pretext for her rejection is that she hasn't borne Henry VIII a successor. As such, for all the grandeur of her character, she does not find a place in our discussion on Shakespearean mothers.

Ophelia is unfortunate in that her father is too busy to think much of her existence excepting for an occasional reprimand. The brother, like the father, has a few pedantic precepts in keeping with the conventions of the time, for his sister. While the one is busy eavesdropping, the other is an occasional visitor to his home. In moments of crisis she has neither the strength nor the resourcefulness to stand her ground. She yields without a word of protest to her ultimate fate.

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Granting that Ophelia's mother, assuming one, cannot stand up to her worldlywise husband in the matter of love between their daughter and the prince, still it is very probable, she can yet prevent the mental breakdown and eventual death of her daughter, after Polonius's death. Frustrated in love, with the father out of the scene and the brother out of sight, to whom else can she open up her heart but to a beloved mother, who alone can provide the necessary psychological ballast for the unfortunate lady to stay steady. R. R. Young in his introduction to his edition of *Hamlet* has quite put his finger on the right place when he says:

"Ophelia is unfortunate in that she lacks guidance. .... She is quite lost in this world of intrigue and deceit, and her innocence is even used by her own father in his stratagems." Young has touched merely the fringe of the problem, perhaps inadvertently.

One wonders whether that great tragic beauty, Desdemona, would have fallen to the brave stories of the Moor, if only she has a mother to steady her faltering steps in life. Brabantio knows next to nothing about his daughter when he describes in the full Court of the Duke, his daughter as

> "A maiden never bold;
> of spirit so still and quiet that her emotion
> Blushed at herself ....."

No wonder events later prove him to be entirely on the wrong. It is her tragedy that in the great crisis of her life and love, she has to seek counsel and comfort from the very man who has so adroitly put the noose round her neck. Dowden possibly is implying such a pathetic predicament of Desdemona when he says, "But if Desdemona loves not with the most 'instructed' heart, she yet loves purely and with tender devotion."

Cordelia's, no less her father's, tragedy can be said to stem from the situation of Lear being a widower for a long time. At his age, Lear has had enough of power to a point of disgust and which in a way has kept him pre-occupied with the affairs of the state. He is now in a mood to abdicate his power and is seeking spiritual solace, and identity in his daughters, particularly from Cordelia, in the absence of his queen. Yes, a kingdom for one who says, "Papa, you are everything to us. We love you first and last and none else." This is no mere caprice of a senile father. It is strict barter, a *quid pro quo*. What he loses in material possessions he wants to gain in spiritual returns. The long bereavement in his beloved queen and the sense of loss which has been lying dormant in the tumult and commotion of the affairs of the state, rears up at the moment of retirement from active rule. His is a heart, an old heart, hungering for

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love, for a new identity, for spiritual moorings. Poor Cordelia fails to read this tremendous vacuum in and urge of her father and utterly upsets the balance of the old man. Her refusal to toe the line of her elder sisters, who do not see any harm, in humoring what they consider as a mere whim of an aged father, further aggravates the situation. How else should one explain such eruption of fire and brimstone from old Lear, except as a case of Love's perversion, becoming positive hatred? The absence of a mother has indirectly hit very hard Cordelia who could not divine into the depths of vacuum the old king felt.

Let us hear Lear :

"I loved her most, and thought to set my rest
On her kind nursery — Hence, and avoid my sight!
So be my grave, my peace, as here I give
Her father's heart from her! ..."

He is seeking love, rest, kind nursery and peace in her.

In sharp contrast to the situations of Ophelia, Desdemona and even of Cordelia, Prospero is all attention and love to Miranda. Miranda, in her utter isolation and innocence, does not feel any need or want to be satisfied. For Prospero too she is his sole comfort and joy, in an island with that grotesque Caliban haunting and scheming against them all the time. It is a mysterious world of magic, silence and wonder and normal human relations get shrouded in a mist of magic spells.

The sad lot of Imogen conversely proves how very unfortunate is a young woman without a mother and what is worse having a step-dame to reckon with. Parting from Cloten, the second lord contemplates on the state of Imogen :

".....Alas! poor princess,
Thou divine Imogen, what thou endur'st
Betwixt a father by thy step-dame govern'd,
A mother hourly coining plots, a wooer
More hateful than foul expulsion is
of thy dear husband, than that horrid act
Of the divorce he'ld make!... ....."

That in brief sums up the sad plight of Imogen, in the context of our present discussion.

Reverting now to the exceptions mentioned at the outset of this discussion, young Shakespeare under the immediate spell of senecan tragedies, and under the compulsions of his theme of *Titus Andronicus*, has given the character of a mother, Tamora. In this earliest tragedy of Shakespeare, Tamora is but a robot in the revenge theme. From the time her eldest son Alarbus is

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sacrificed to propitiate the shades of his own sons, by Titus, queen Tamora is an avenging monster with no quarters given or taken. As such she is more a political character like Volumnia than a mother who stands for love, understanding, forgiveness and sacrifice, a mother ministering to the quiet happiness of a home.

What of Gertrude the queen mother in *Hamlet* ? One might ask. But then Prince Hamlet is in no need to be protected and guided by a mother and that too by one who has fallen so low as to feed on garbage. She has been so seduced as not to understand the true nature and quality of the grief of her own son. It is part of prince Hamlet's mission enjoined on him by his father's spirit, that he should purge her off her taints and thus redeem and restore her to the sacred position of a real mother.

To his mother's agonising cry :

"O Hamlet, thou has cleft my heart in twain" the son replies :

> "O, throw away the worse part of it,
> And live the purer with the other half.
> Goodnight — but go not to my uncle's bed ;
> Assume a virtue, if you have it not."

This is pure and simple instruction to a fallen woman, nevertheless a mother. Certainly it is not Shakespeare's intention to hold up Gertrude as the mother, the ideal of maternal virtues.

Volumnia is there but only to play politics, to appeal to her brave son Coriolanus to spare his motherland. Her role in the play is anything but maternal. It is more political, actuated by an overweaning ambition on behalf of her son. "There is an occasional element of inhumanity in her words to and about him". She tells Virgilia, Coriolanus's wife :

"Hear me profess sincerely : Had I a dozen sons, each in my love alike and none less dear than thine and my good Marcius, I had rather had eleven die nobly for their country than one voluptuously surfeit out of action."

In the words of Prof. Iyengar :

"Volumnia is in no small measure the architect of her son's tragedy — O, the pity of it. She is her son's fate, just as Gertrude is her son's, for the dominating good mother can ruin a son as much as the incestuous bad mother."

However, in both the instances the relationship is one of mother and son, son who can take up the role of a protector. We can just drop out Hermione as a mother, since she goes

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underground practically till the end of the play. It is not motherhood under exposure but fidelity to her husband.

So we come to the very meagre sketch of lady Capulet, the only exception to the general absence of mother and daughter relationship. Lady Capulet is not taken up seriously by anyone of the eminent critics of the play, *Romeo and Juliet*. Shakespeare has chosen to give the nurse, the foster-mother of Juliet, a more interesting and prominent role, who along with Mercutio is a superb creation. Juliet's affection for the confidence in the nurse is as spontaneous and complete as her coolness and distance to her mother.

Which mother can resist an appeal from her only daughter couched in such pathetic and piteous terms ?

Jul : " Is there no pity sitting in the clouds,
That sees into the bottom of my grief ?
O, sweet my mother, cast me not away !
Delay this marriage for a month, a week ;
Or, if you do not, make the bridal bed
In that dim monument where Tybalt lies. "

Yet, lady Capulet has neither pity nor tenderness to give from her unfeeling heart. The simple fact is that Shakespeare just ignores her. Editor George Sampson in his introduction to the play disposes off Juliet's parents in two sentences. He says, " Lady Capulet has an early outburst of super literary ecstasy .....but never again returns to that adorned and precious manner. Capulet himself is a fair study of fatuous and testy old age..... "

Recalling Shakespeare's achievement, Creiznach observes :

" Here it is that Shakespeare's unique position in the realm of poetic fiction becomes most strikingly apparent. Like a creator he sits enthroned over twelve hundred beings, kings. cavaliers, clowns, criminals, radiant embodiment of ideal womanhood, elves and goblins ; all are the offspring of his mighty brain. And among all these various figures, there is not one that is not both individual and typical, a sure witness to the truth of Goethe's dictum that ' the particular, if it be significant is also universal ' ..... "

One wishes that Shakespeare had thought of adding to this magnificent world of myriad characters, at least one seriously-developed character of a mother, an ideal mother who is as important in the play as a Lear, or a Shylock or a Prospero. That such a character of a mother is not there is a point of curiosity one cannot willingly let slip.

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LOVE'S VIGIL

C. F. ANDREWS

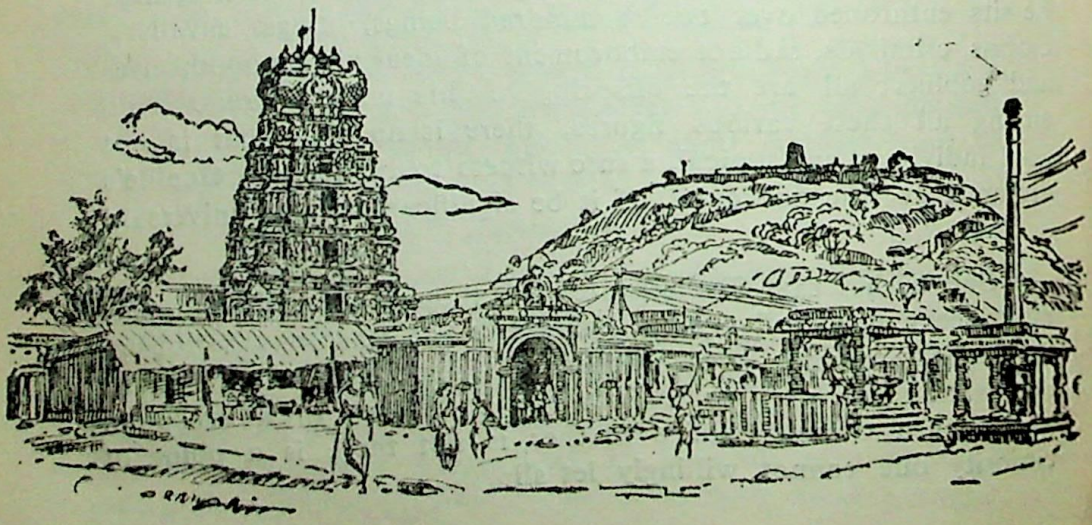
I will keep my love pure and inviolate
Through the dark days and long-drawn hours of pain,
And in this winter of desolation wait
Steadfast, till golden summer comes again.

I will build an imperishable shrine,
One lamp before its altar burning bright,
Silent prayers shall wreathe their anodyne,
And stillness soothe in sorrow's own dispite.

This numb, chill frost shall break in sudden flood,
This ice-bound stream shall flush to overflowing,
Each throbbing vein pulse music through the blood,
And winter end in summer's rapturous glowing.

Joy shall return in its own season due,
If my heart's love to its own truth be true.

(From " Shama 'A ", October 1920)



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INDIAN ENGLISH POETRY
Before and After Independence

BIJAY KUMAR DAS

The place and status of Indian English poetry before and after Independence are open to debate. There are people representing diametrically opposite views on the achievement of this poetry in general. One group outrightly condemns the poetry written before 1947 and eulogizes the post-Independence Indian English poetry. Take for instance, R. Parthasarathy's pronouncement that Indian verse in English, "did not seriously begin to exist till after the withdrawal of the British from India".[1] P. Lal and Adil Jassawalla are in the company of R. Parthasarathy in denouncing the poetry of Sri Aurobindo and his contemporaries, lock, stock, barrel.

On the other hand there are critics like V. K. Gokak, C. D. Narasimhaiah and a few others who have lauded the poetry of Sri Aurobindo and his contemporaries like Sarojini Naidu. To Gokak, Sarojini Naidu is the Yeats of India and Sri Aurobindo a great innovator in the art of versification. He classifies the Indian poets in English before Independence into two groups : "neo-symbolists" and "neo-modernists". The neo-symbolists dive deep into mysticism and the neo-modernists' vision is coloured by humanism. C. D. Narasimhaiah speaks of Toru Dutt, Sarojini Naidu and Sri Aurobindo in admiration in his well-known book, *The Swan and the Eagle*.

He lauded both Toru and Sarojini as pioneers in the field of Indian English poetry. Professor C. D. Narasimhaiah is more eloquent in his praise of Sri Aurobindo whom he considers not only as a distinguished poet but critic too. He goes a step forward to tell that English language has gained from Sri Aurobindo and compares him with Joseph Conrad who broadened the descriptive range of the English language. He says, "It may be said of Sri Aurobindo that he made the English language accommodate certain hitherto unknown (inconscient) areas of experience both through his prose work, "Life Divine" and

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through his epic *Savitri*, not to speak of the numerous translations from Sanskrit poetry and drama as well as his other less known but important works".[2] It is interesting and important to remember that Sri Aurobindo nearly succeeded in creating an idiom in English which is peculiar and unique to the genius of Indian people. Well-known scholars and critics like K.R.S. Iyengar, Sisir Kumar Ghose and M. K. Naik too praise Sri Aurobindo and Sarojini Naidu as poets of importance. In the course of an article entitled "Indian Poetry in English Yesterday-Today-Tomorrow" (*The Literary Criterion* Vol. XVIII No. 3, 1983. Pp.9-18), Professor K. R. S. Iyenger takes R. Parthasarathy, Keki N. Daruwalla and Adil Jassawalla to task for criticising Sri Aurobindo and earlier poets in English for wrong reasons.

On the other hand there are sceptics who denounce post-Independence Indian English poets beginning with Nissim Ezekiel. To some purists the best post-1947 poets in English would appear as Pseudo-Keats, second-rate Tennyson, third-rate Hardy, and fourth-rate Eliot. It seems to me that a good deal of poetry of our time can be highlighted without denying or denigrating the poetry of our predecessors or taking a parochial and what George Woodcock calls, "literary incestuousness" attitude to recent Indian poetry in English. I believe that serious Indian English poetry came to be written not immediately after Independence but in the 'Sixties and after. The Indian English poetic movement of the 'Sixties and 'Seventies did much to fix its image as deliberately deficient, moderate with a will. Indian English poets sought comparisons with Anglo-Americans and unfortunately, followed either the genteel English poets or the confessing Americans. This tendency has gradually frayed and will probably give way altogether for the fact that however deliberate (and after a faltering start) post-Independence Indian English poetry has proved increasingly robust, varied, responsive to the times and enjoyable. It is now very rarely either consciously indebted or consciously hostile to Anglo-American models, it has acquired a distinct character and discovered its own voice. The voice is discovered by the poet's genius for intimately registering the idiom of his own world.

Post-Independence Indian English poetry is both a break with the past and a continuation with it too. Modernity in recent Indian English poetry, which essentially means a break with the past, has three identifiable manifestations : one — a past-oriented vision which is associated with a sense of loss and hopelessness, a sort of cultural pessimism ; two—a future-oriented vision, associated with a desire to remake the world ; three—a present-

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oriented attitude, ahistorical, amoral, neutral, stoic, ironic, ambivalent, absurdist. This modernity has two modes of "expression"—one, it might result in one turning inward going on one's "voyage within"; two, it might result in an ironic observation of reality, in "voyage without."

The incipient romanticism and rapid narcissicism of the early Indian English poetry are now discarded in favour of poetry as "a criticism of life." Post-Independence Indian English poetry tries hard to set its roots and develop its own artistic credo. It has successfully risen above "decadent romanticism" and in the hands of such brilliant poets as Nissim Ezekiel, A. K. Ramanujan and R. Parthasarathy, it is acquiring new dimensions.

Jayanta Mahapatra, A. K. Ramanujan, R. Parthasarathy, Arun Kolatkar and Kamala Das turn inward to get into their roots. There is a need to acclimatise English language to an indigenous tradition to write poetry effectively. R. Parthasarathy, as it were, gives a clarion call to Indian English poets to return to their respective linguistic traditions. He asks:

> How long can foreign poets
> Provide the staple of your lines?
> Turn inward, scrape the bottom of your past.
>
> (*Rough Passage*)

It seems natural to conclude that a poet with a live cultural past behind him, aware of his roots and perhaps prejudiced by those roots, has a greater probability of writing significantly than one who has no knowledge of any Indian language other than English. Jayanta Mahapatra's "Relationship" is set in Orissa—a land of "forbidding myth". Mahapatra is "caught in the currents of time" and in his attempt to "go into the unknown in me" tries "to speak of the myth of sleep and action" in order to soothe himself and others who suffer a similar fate. Parthasarathy, Kolatkar and Ramanujan have tried to evoke a sense of their past and inherit the native traditions. Kamala Das too works out her emotional and sexual traumas in poems of unexceptionable frankness reminiscent of the medieval Sahaja poets who espoused free love as a means of realizing oneself. While A. K. Ramanujan's mind seems to be perpetually busy probing the areas of strength and weakness of his Hindu heritage, Kamala Das highlights with boldness the sexual permissiveness and uninhibition rooted in her native culture and produces arresting effect on readers.

Post-Independence Indian English poetry is genuine because it is deeply felt and addressed to the whole community. Indian situations form a vital part of it. The superstition and folk

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belief that exist in Indian society, turns out to be a favourite theme of recent poetry. Nissim Ezekiel handles such a theme with superb irony and subdued mockery in "Night of the Scorpion". The mother is astung, the nationalist and sceptical father tries, "every curse and blessing/powder, mixture, herb and hybrid," as the peasants swarm in to console her offering advice of a strongly ritualistic and faith healing hand. The mother's reaction to her own suffering, "Thank God, the scorpion picked on me / and spared my children", ironically rejects both the responses. Ramanujan in his much anthologized poem, "A River" does not present the traditional hymns in praise of the river but records instead, the details about the twins, which the women would have borne, bringing the experience to its simple and painful humanity. India's present day ills like brain-drain, too attract the attention of our poets O. P. Bhatnagar examines the implication of the exodus of the Indian intellectuals to foreign lands and makes a fervent appeal to them to return home. These intellectuals are worse than migrating birds, for the birds, who fly away in winter because of trenchant cold, return home at the turn of the season. But our intellectuals fail to escape the lure of gold and glamour and stay back. Thus in a poem called "Look Homeward Angel", Bhatnagar ironically calls them "angels". Likewise, Shiv K. Kumar comes heavily on the politicians who are unprincipled and time-servers. In "Epitaph on an Indian politician", Shiv K Kumar has given a very daring portrayal of the politiciand :

> Vasectomized of all genital urges
> For love and beauty
> he often crossed floors
> as his wife leaped across beds.

Besides the contemporary problems, there is one vital problem —namely, the problem of creating an Indian English idiom which haunts our poets without end. As R. Parthasarathy has rightly observe :

> That language is a tree
> loses colour
> under another sky.

Some of our poets have tried to evoke the sense of "Indianness" both in content and language in their poetry. Ezekiel's "Every Indian poem in Indian English", "Good-bye party for Miss Pushpa T. S.", Keki N. Daruwalla's "The professor condoles" and R. Parthasarathy's "Incident at Ahmedpore Station" are cases in point.

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Nissim Ezekiel, Keki N. Daruwalla, Margaret Chatterjee and Lila Ray, who are unable to share the indigenous tradition, take a different attitude, ahistorical, amoral, neutral, stoic and ironic. The expression results in an ironic observation of reality, "Voyage without". O. P. Bhatnagar joins them in making pointed, objective and thought-provoking observations on the reality around us. If poetry written in English in Commonwealth and third world countries today is any indication, correctness of language should not be insisted upon. American, Australian, African and West Indian writers have discovered their own idioms in English. Post-Independence Indian English poets have attempted and succeeded to a limited extent in evolving a new Indo-English idiom. Though Indian English poetry has outgrown victorian taboos and our poets have broken new ground, the quest for cultural moorings seems to be a major pre-occupation with them, a trait they unwittingly share with Madhusudan Dutt, an earlier Indian English poet of repute. But the pervasive presence of this conscious "Indianness" without any trace of romantic nostalgia or exotic quaintness sets contemporary Indian English poetry apart from the imitative mediocrity of much of this poetry in the pre-Independence period.

A. K. Ramanujan's determination : "I must seek and will find / my particular hell only in my Hindu mind". Kamala Das's assertion : "I am Indian, very brown / born in Malabar / I speak three languages / write in two / dream in one"; Nissim Ezekiel's resolution : "I have made my commitments now / This is one to stay where I am" ; R. Parthasarathy's persuasion : "How long can foreign poets / provide the staple of your lines / Turn inward, scrape the bottom of your past" ; Daruwalla's contemplation : "Then why should I tread the Kafka beat or the westeland / when, mother, you are near at hand / one vast, sprawling defect" and Jayanta Mahapatra's attempt "to speak of the myth of sleep and action / in the hope of soothing myself and those others" have unmistakably indicated the direction Indian English poetry is likely to take in the future.

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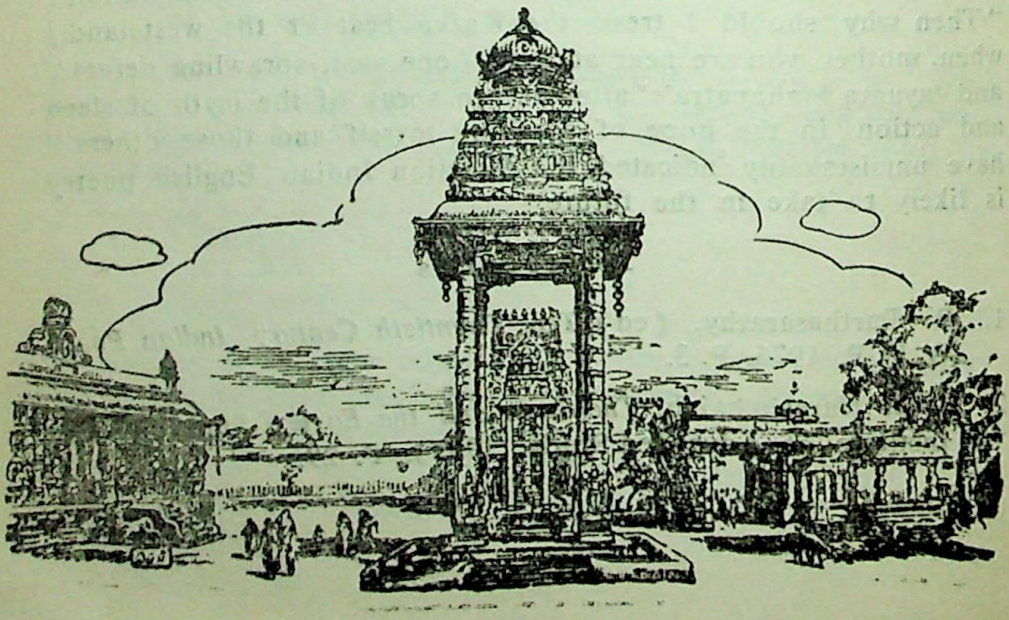
SOUL'S PRAYER

Dr. HEMAMBUJAN

The long night of gloomy ignorance,
Pervades my humble soul earth bound
When to see the light of enlightenment ?
Oh, the wheels of time revolve on
as the sand dunes of the vast desert,
shifting ever with the free strong winds
and as the ocean tides ever trying to reach
the long shore lines across the beach sands.
The earthly days at dawn see the light
when my soul ever to behold divine light
The ocean profound enshrines His power
Oh, when such spiritual depth to be mine ?
The rivers rush afar to join the mighty seas
When, Oh, does this pilgrim join the Supreme
after a short sojourn of hectic existence ?
Oh, my Master Immortal, answer this my prayer !



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TWO WIVES

(Short Story)

"KUMUDINI"

Translated from Tamil by Dr. Prema Nandakumar

I met Arunachalam's wife on the Madras beach last month. The Arunachalam I speak of is a well-known writer. It is not proper to mention his real name. Hence I am using this name. I love meeting his wife whenever I go to Madras She is a very pleasant lady, full of mirth and laughter. She loves playing with her son on the beach. When I met her she enquired about my well-being and asked me to come over the next day to their house for lunch. They had just then built their own house and had settled there.

I went to their house the next day, all happiness. They showed me round the house. Bureaus fixed within the wall, the drawing-room all mosaic, "shower" in the bathroom. I praised the set-up generously. Later it was sheer enjoyment to eat the sweets and good food prepared by that lady. There are beautiful women among housewives. Then there are housewives who are extremely capable in managing their houses. But I feel this lady is the most beautiful and at the same time most efficient housewife I have ever come across. Arunachalam is a lucky man. Readers are only used to his humorous short stories in which the husband and the wife wage a continuous war of words. They would certainly be surprised that so much unity and joy are in his house.

After lunch, Arunachalam and myself adjourned to his "office" and discussed the state of the publishing world for quite some time. His wife was playing with the child in the garden. There was a swing in the garden. She would place the child on the swing and give it an effective push. When the swing returned, the child would dash against its mother. Immediately it will explode into laughter.

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"Are you not disturbed by the child when engaged in writing?" I asked him.

"Yes. In fact, previously I had a wife who had no child", he began. Then slowly he unwound and gave me details of his past life. He did not give the story in such a logical progression. But I have tried to present it so, and as far as possible in his own words.

"When I finished college, I joined as a clerk in a company in this same city. Thirty-five rupees salary, I was already married. My wife had no close relations. Her father died soon after our marriage. The salary was little, but I brought my wife here and we set up house. We lived in a two-room portion in Triplicane. My wife kept those two tiny rooms very neat. She would cook only what I liked. Even my clothes I was not allowed to wash. She herself would wash them shining white and fold them up in a neat way.

"Yes, his shouting is a disturbance now and then. It cannot be helped. A child must play. He should not be controlled. The garden is small. When I see this I am reminded of a French writer. 'Open the window. Let the garden have some breeze!' Sometimes I feel like going up into the open terrace and work there. But I love watching the mother and the child."

He was silent for a moment. "I had a wife before. But she had no child", he said lost in memories.

I had known Arunachalam fairly well. But I never knew that this lady was his second wife. Hence I was surprised.

"That was when I began writing stories. My wife assisted me in this job as well. After dinner she would sit near a hurricane lamp and take my dictation. 'You have worked throughout the day. Go and lie down', I would tell her. But she would never listen. 'You are jealous that my handwriting is better than yours', she would say and laugh. Really, her writing was sheer joy to read.

"On Sundays we would go to the beach and converse endlessly, building castles in the air. My stories were all rejected. But what if? My heart was not sore. Both of us believed that I would be a great writer one day and earn astronomical sums. She would imagine the house we were going to build after the good days came. I would detail the lovely sarees and jewels I would buy for her. She was beautiful.

"She wanted to possess an Assamese khaddar silk sari. 'Oh, describe to me that sari!' she told me once. I complied with

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her wish. 'Sea-green, dark-green. That colour silk interwoven with gold *zari*. Bordered with lotuses. A light-green blouse to go with it. And a string of pearls'. Green was ideal for her rosy complexion. When I described it, she felt as though I had already bought it. She smiled, holding my hands to her eyes.

"In those days we cooked only once a day. The left-overs were for supper. After two years of such hardship, an editor accepted one of my stories for publication. I remember the day when his letter came. It was nine in the morning. My wife opened the envelope. The famous editor had written accepting my article and asked me to meet him if that were possible. My wife read that letter eagerly several times. In fact, after all these months of disappointment it was hard to believe in the letter's message.

"It was six months after that that my first novel was published. You know how it became an immediate favourite with the readers and I became famous. I resigned my clerical job and accepted the post of editor for a well-known magazine. But I had to work harder than before. In the mornings several people would come to meet me. Day-time was for the magazine office. Evenings used to be filled up with lectures or meeting political leaders or writing articles.

"I was unable to spend leisure hours with my wife now. There was hardly any time even to meet her. We had a good income now. So we moved to an independent house. A cook and servants were engaged. I used to take my wife to music recitals or cinemas. For the rest life was dull for her. My good fortune had resulted in our becoming remote to one another. She used to be tired just by not doing anything. In the olden days she could be proud of being my amanuensis. But now I had a steno and a typist in the office. She decided that she was of no use to anyone. 'What is the use of my living?' she would curse herself. One day she told me that she wished to join the films.

"I was shocked. What was I to reply? Firstly, she had no talent for acting. Even if she did possess the talent, would I like my wife being an actress?

"Do you know how to act? What makes you think that even if you act, you will get money and fame? What experience do you have? You have never shown any interest in that field!" Such my objections.

"But I want to do something."

"Does that mean you should become a cinema actress? You have only seen how the audience reacts with clappings when a

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successful cinestar appears on the screen. You think it is so easy! Before gaining such fame, that actress has spent ten or fifteen years learning to act and sing. Only she knows the hell she has been through. There will be very few things that she can be really proud of. Instead of being a minor actress to be shouted at by the director during the shooting, is it not better to be welcomed to the front row as the wife of a well-known editor?"

"I do not propose to be a *minor* actress. You have influence with several producers. If you recommend my case, they will give me the heroine's part!"

"Oh, Lord, you do not know how to act!"

"So you have decided that I am an idiot, incapable of doing anything!"

A week later she returned to the subject. "Yes, I do not know acting. Let me learn it from somebody."

"After recommending you, suppose the producer has losses, how can I meet him again?"

"Always the same tune! You have decided that I am no good," she said and wept.

"If they do not advertise that a famous actress is in the film, who will come to watch it?"

"Mrs. Arunachalam would do. The wife of a famous editor!"

"Mrs. Arunachalam or Mrs. somebody-else, you do not know how to act. People will not pay to see actors who cannot act."

"Go on, repeat it. You have concluded that I cannot act."

"What conclusion?" My tone became harsh. "Acting and film engagement are not learnt in a couple of months. One needs to toil for several years. I do not want my wife to be a film actress. You were so happy and contented when we were poor and indigent. Why are you disgruntled when we have grown prosperous?"

"Then I did what I could. I had some work to do. But now there is nothing. I would like to do something." She was adamant. The chasm between us became wider with the passage of time.

My wife had an aunt in Madras. She was well off. When we were poor she gave us nothing except pompous counsel. Now she drew closer to my wife. In fact she began treating me as if she were my mother-in-law. "The girl is so full of enthusiasm. Why not accede to her wish?" she would say. I would be angry and reply sharply. This would incense her and she would goad my wife in my absence.

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One day my wife came to me and said that since I had rejected her request for help, she was determined to enter some production unit in a minor role and make her way up gradually. Was this to be the end of our unified, loving married togetherness? If she followed her inclinations, it would be impossible for us to live together. She will have to live separately. And yet she spoke of this with great calm.

When I thought of our togetherness and affection and mutual love, I was deeply hurt. I spoke to her gently. But she was firm in her decision.

After recounting all this, Arunachalam was silent for a while. We could see the mother and the child playing in the garden. The boy had got down the swing. The mother was an elephant now and he was the rider. He could not always balance upon his mother's back, and would roll over. There would be peals of laughter at such mishaps.

I felt happy as if I were watching a superb painting. And then I sat comparing this happy picture with the sad story of the first wife. I was pulled back to reality by Arunachalam's voice.

"What do you think was the end of it?"

"Evidently she followed her inclination."

"Oh, no. She had to follow the whims of her child," he said and pointed his finger at his wife and child with great pride.

"By God's grace from the day there were signs that she was to become a mother, the film-madness left her. From then on no difference of opinion has marred our life together. We are as united as ever", he said.

Before I could give vent to my wonderment, his wife came to the window. "Is our playing and laughter disturbing you?"

"Oh, no, no. Laugh as much as you want. In fact we are also coming out to join you in the fun", said Arunachalam and got up.

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ANNIHILATION

AGNES SOTIRACOPOULOU - SKINA

O sudden moment —
When all my senses blossom
Complete and alive
As if beneath the swan.

How strange this shudder
Which grips my whole body
And brings me to fullness —

But it always passes
Fades there on the edge of the desert
Leaving me alone
And more ruined than before —
Bitterly annihilated.

Translated from French by Hugh Mckinley and the author

ACROSS DELUGE

INDIRA SANT

Body wildly on the move
Buffetted about
Cyclone of anxiety rising.

Cotton bud bursting
After mind separated in fragment

Body and mind having flown by
I steadied, concentrated here
Green sprout tending
There across deluge.

Water hard to contain in eyes
Still passed beyond eyes
The heart's earth blessed manifold motherliness.

Translated from Marathi by Shrikant R. Tambe

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A CRITIQUE OF "SIMILES IN HAIKU" *

PURASU BALAKRISHNAN

Professor Raghavacharyulu, in his book of poems, *Similes in Haiku*, has added stature to Indo-anglian poetry. For convenience of reference (a point we shall clarify later) we shall call them "haikoid" (haiku-like) rather than "haiku"; and for the same reason, we may call the book "Haikoid Similes". In the three hundred and sixty-five haikoids collected here, to form a neat calendar of the year (though not in terms of the seasons), we have an abundance of poetic draughts for which we may be grateful. As Professor K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar says in his foreword to the book, whether one reads these serially or dips into them at random, one feels duly rewarded and is set thinking a little on his own. We fully concur with Professor Srinivasa Iyengar that this collection makes, in his words, a splendid achievement. It takes its place alongside Tagore's "Stray Birds," and it has a unique place owing to its haikoid nature.

We shall first survey the book as poetry, and then deal with its haiku–haikoid aspect.

The diction, as a rule, is happy, and the images strike one by their sheer appropriateness :

A good man's virtue,
Like the gem in the clay-cart,
Is a fact of grace. (No. 52)

There seems, on the face of it, nothing astounding in the statement. But letting it sink into one's mind, one perceives its manifold appropriateness; and this is the acid test for applying the epithet "great" to any writing.

There is power of utterance, as in

Unless the mind burns,
Like the lens under a ray,
Truth has no power. (No. 58)

Siiles in Haiku, D. V. K. Raghavacharyulu. Maruthi Book Depot., Guntur. Price : Rs. 20.

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or as in

Love, like a sword drawn,
Forces its entry into
The innocent heart. (No. 317)

At times it achieves a colour-effect, as in

The blazoned summer,
Like a sum of bright suns, whirls
In golden fury. (No. 325)

or as in

The water-lily,
Like the lady of the lake,
Wears a snow-white robe (No. 79)

which have the magic of poetry.

The poet, at least on one occasion, has captured the charm of Kalidasa in an echo, as in

The maiden's glances,
Like light upon water, splash
A ripple of pearls. (No. 40)

When a poet has given us such plenty, it may look churlish to find flaws in his creation. But, under the constraint of informed objectivity, we have to point out that none of the pearls that we have exhibited from his collection, is a true haiku. Nor are the others that we have not exhibited. Notwithstanding this, we may still enjoy them as poetry. For poetry, like a rose, by whatever name it is called, is its own self.

The distinguishing feature of the haiku is that it paints a picture, or shall we say, it etches a sketch, but does not say anything about it, whereas the simile, while it gives a picture, says everything about it, at least as the poet would have it at that moment of time. The two are incompatible. We shall expatiate on this further.

It is more true to say that the haiku evokes a picture rather than paints it. And the picture is self-evolving or self-expanding, in terms of the ripples of sensations caused in the reader, like the ripples caused by a stone dropped in a well. The picture serves as an evocation of a mood or sensation. Any explanation or suggestion, however slight, put into a haiku, at once dehaikues it. The haiku arrests a moment of life or the universe in its unalloyed purity or " suchness "—what the Japanese call *sono-mama* —without comment. This it often does by means of juxtaposition of images or superimposition of one image on another. It just beckons to the reader, "Look!" And it is well worth looking at. And looked at, it draws the reader deeper and deeper into

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itself, or rather, beyond itself. The haiku has been described as a "wordless poem". The truth is that the wordless poetry starts where the few bare words — the seventeen syllables or *jion* (Japanese symbol-sounds) — of the haiku end. The greater poetry of the haiku is in the silence extending beyond the bare, brief utterance, unchartered, but lending itself to be chartered by the reader in the light of his own sensations and his individual make-up.

A simile is a comment on the images juxtaposed or superimposed; and this comment, or particularised way of thinking, effectively stills the ripples. It points to a manner of chartering its own evocation, and thus nullifies the evocation. Kalidasa's poetry is full of haiku moments, which his similes are, but they are not haiku. They may be described as solved haiku. We may call them haikoid or haiku-like. Thus, from his *Abhijnana-Sakuntalam*, we give one:

Sunrise in the east
Moonset in the west —
The law of vicissitude

We may however convert this into a haiku by just omitting the simile or solving component of the verse, thus:

Sunrise in the east
Moonset in the west

It will be noticed that here two pictures or images are juxtaposed, as in the haiku.

Just as a simile translates the haiku (in the sense of Bottom having been "translated" in Shakespeare's play), a name or caption given to a haiku only serves to exhibit its insufficiency. In a personal communication to the present writer, Mr. Alexis Rotella, President of the Haiku Society of America, writes, "Haiku, in general, do not have titles because the essence of what is said should include the meaning of what the title conveys. In other words, if a haiku needs a title, it is a weak piece of work. Haiku are not three-line poems."

In a similar manner, the essence of what is said in the haiku should include what the simile incorporated in it conveys, and the similes are to be done away with.

We shall illustrate these considerations from Professor Raghavacharyulu's book itself.
Some of his simile-haiku expound an idea:

The long-repeated lie,
Like the emperor's new clothes,
Renders truth a fake (No.210)

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or

Sound to tone must turn,
To say the most with the least,
Like a Vedic hymn (No.241)

These abstract ideas while in themselves well-rendered, are far-removed from evocative images of a haiku. The maxims (*kurals*) of Tiruvalluvar, although they are much more compact than the haiku, consisting as they do of fourteen symbol-sounds (or *asai* in Tamil) as compared with the seventeen of the haiku, and vast and varied in content, are not haiku.

Other simile-haiku of Professor Raghavacharyulu are fine poetry and draw a picture, but they are dehaikued by the simile put into them, as in

Gently the snow drifts
Across the valley, like swans
In the lily-pond (No.207)

Shorn of the simile, this picture may be made into a haiku, as follows:

In the lily pond
swans float
Across the valley
snow drifts

Another example of his simile-haiku:

A fresh-water spring,
Like sprightly children at play,
Sparkles with laughter (No.53)

This may be recreated as a haiku thus:

The fresh-water spring
sparkles
Sprightly children around it
laugh and play

In recreating them, we have followed only the sense of the haiku, not their syllabic count.

Other simile-haiku of Professor Raghavacharyulu, though they etch a picture, do not lend themselves to such conversion, since there is no juxtaposition or superimposition of images in them, as in the following:

The ice-berg in fog,
Like a festive chariot,
Looms in the ocean (No. 206)

We would fain turn from these experiments to a haiku of the famous master Basho and its interpretation, in order to view

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these in its light which reveals the surpassing nature of the haiku. We quote from Geoffrey Bownas's introduction to the Penguin Book of Japanese Verse:

> He (the haiku poet) should so express the nature of the particular as to define, through it, the essence of all creation; his seventeen syllables should capture a vision into the nature of the world. Here is the intuitive flash of Zen which also affects the structure of Basho's most famous poem and many other notable haiku,
>
> An old pond
> A frog jumps in—
> Sound of water
>
> — the statement first of the unchanging, then the momentary, and finally, the splash, the point of interaction between the two.

In order to show the expanding nature of the ripples caused by the impact of the haiku on the reader, we may add to this Dorothy Britton's interpretation of this same haiku in her introduction to Basho's *Narrow Road to a Far Province : A Haiku Journey :*

> On the surface, this poem simply presents a beautiful picture complete with sound effects. It carries one, in imagination, to the veranda of a temple in Kyoto, perhaps, overlooking a landscaped garden hundreds of years old with a moss-edged pond. One hears the sudden plop of a frog jumping into the dark water on a still spring afternoon. But the thought processes started by this poem go on and on. The pond could be eternity, God, or the Ultimate Truth about this universe and man. And we, brash mortals with our works and our inventions—each one of us no better than a frog jumping in — make but a moment's splash, and the ripples circle and die away....

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Dr. PUTTAPARTHI NARAYANACHARYA

A Poet of Staggering Scholarship and a Polyglot

V. VENKATA SUBBAIAH

[Dr. Puttaparthi Narayanacharya is one of the great—if not the greatest—living poets of Andhra Pradesh. He is a versatile scholar and a literary critic of distinction, besides being a polyglot. He is a golden synthesis between the epic age and the modern age. He received in January 1988 the prestigeous Rashtriya Bhasha Parishat (of Calcutta) Award of Ten Thousand Rupees for his distinguished service to Telugu literature. The following is a detailed account of his career by one of his devoted students. —*Editor*]

Puttaparthi Narayanacharya—affectionately called "Puttaparthi" by his admirers—is the most charismatic figure in contemporary Telugu literature. He is a poet, literary critic, translator, composer, and a polyglot. He is a doyen in several of these generes and has enriched Telugu literature as no one man possibly can. Till very recently he had been a great orator who could hold the audiences spell-bound for several hours on any literary subject. His rendition of poetry and especially of his "Sivatandavam" used to be equally enthralling.

As a poet Narayanacharya is a harmonious blend of the best in classicism and modernism. As a literary critic he is in the tradition of great commentators like Mallinatha. He has the abundant commonsense of Samuel Johnson and the cultivated punctiliousness of T. S. Eliot acquired through his careful study of Western criticism. He has about 5,000 musical compositions to his credit and the notation he has done for some of them exhibits his great knowledge of musicology. As a scholar he is astonishingly versatile. His scholarship is not confined to a few languages or subjects. He is a polyglot with a good knowledge of most of the Indian languages, both living and dead. He knows several European languages also fairly well. When he was honoured at the Russian Embassy in Delhi, he pleasantly surprised everyone by making a speech in Russian. Recently he told this author that he would not mind if someone called him a bad poet, but hated to be called an inadequate scholar. He learns new subjects with the eagerness of a young man. His friends were not surprised when he started learning the Mridangam in his mid-seventies. He says that he will learn anything that he thinks is useful to him as a poet.

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Narayanacharya was born on 28th March, 1914, in Penugonda, the summer capital of Vijayanagar empire. His father Srinivasacharya was a well-known scholar in Sanskrit and Telugu. He belongs to the ancestry of Tirumala Tatacharya, the religious preceptor of Sri Krishnadeva Raya. Narayanacharya started his education in Sanskrit and Telugu under his father. He learnt Bharatanatyam from Mahalakshmamma, the learned dancer from Bukkapatnam. Mrs. Pitt, wife of the then Sub-Collector of Penugonda, who had done research work on Shakespeare and Browning at Cambridge, took the young Narayanacharya under her wing and taught him English language and literature. Narayanacharya took an instant liking for Shakespeare's humanistic characterization which has deeply influenced his literary career.

At the age of twelve Narayanacharya wrote a book in classical metric verse called " Penugonda Lakshmi ", immortalizing the architectural splendour of his place of birth and published it after four years. It blazed a trail of poetical works on places of historical importance. His first book gave Narayanacharya one of his unforgettable and ironic experiences. " Penugonda Lakshmi " was prescribed as a text when he took the *Vidwan* examination in his late 'Twenties. The poet had to read his own book and prepare for the examination. " I don't think any other poet in the world had a similar experience " says Narayanacharya with a chuckle.

During this period Narayanacharya delved deep into Sanskrit *alankara* and *kavya* literatures. He also studied Patanjali and the *Prakarana Granthas* under eminent teachers at the Oriental College, Tirupati.

When he was still a student in Tirupati he came under the influence of Sufi philosophy and Persian poetry and wrote a long poem in metrical verse called " Shaaji. " The maturity of thought and the mastery of form he showed in this book when he was barely nineteen amazed scholars and critics. Immediately after its publication it was prescribed as a text for the Intermediate class by Madras University. In his early 'Twenties Narayanacharya was fascinated by the stage and gave dance recitals and played female roles. But it was only a transient phase in him. Another of his fleeting passions was *avadhaanam*. He performed several *avadhaanams* with distinction. But quickly he came to the conclusion that *avadhaanam* hampers the poetic instinct and distorts the natural thought process of a gifted poet and gave it up. He could not continue his *Vyakarana Siromani* course also because of his personal problems.

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The 'Thirties was a significant period in the history of modern Telugu literature. Romanticism inspired by Wordsworth, Shelley and Keats which hypnotized Andhra like an agreeable spell of magic was gradually weakening. Progressivism inspired by Marx and Engels and spearheaded by Sri Sri was gathering like a hurricane. Narayanacharya was influenced by both and composed several poems. Though his scholarship, mastery of verse form and imaginative fervour are very much present in these collections of poems, they failed to impress the poet himself.

Meanwhile his passion for new languages continued. He learnt a number of Indian languages and started searching for a model which suited his talent and temperament. During this search he discovered the *Sant* poets in Marathi and Tulasidas in Hindi. His mood of uncertainty ended and he saw the path of his future literary life clear and bright.

After Narayanacharya realised that *bhakti* should be his medium of self-expression, the most productive period of his literary life started. *Paadyamu,* a string of *Satakas* poignantly expressing the different moods of Bhakti, and *Saakshatkaramu,* a very sensitive poetic recreation of some significant incidents in the life of Tulasidas were the important results. " Paadyamu " is written in traditional Sanskrit metres on which Narayanacharya has amazing control. In the second book he had experimented with various verse forms from Sanskrit metres to *verse libre.* But the choicest poem of this period is " Sivatandavam " in which his knowledge of music and dance found a poetic expression through the theme of philosophical non-dualism exemplified in the unity of Siva and Kesava.

" Sivatandavam " consists of five sections. In the first one Sandhya, the personified Evening, gets ready for the cosmic dance of Siva. It is written in very brisk *geya.* The second section describes in luxuriant Sanskrit the invocation made by Nandi. It is followed by Siva's *tandava* written in an indigenous metre called *ragada* consisting of twenty syllables and divided into four rhythmic spans of five syllables each. The fourth section is a prayer by Vijaya a heavenly damsel waiting on Parvati. It is composed in mellifluous Sanskrit. The last section describes the *laasya* (the gentle dance performed by women) of Parvati. As Sivasankara Swami, the noted critic, says, " *Sivatandavam* combines music, dance and poetry into a unified whole and does not have an equal in Telugu literature. "

Though Narayanacharya's primary concern was *bhakti,* he was never insensitive to social obligations. The assassination of Mahatma Gandhi moved him to write a profound elegy for him

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called "Gandhiji Mahaprasthaanam". His wife Smt. Kanakamma, a scholar in Sanskrit and Telugu and a poetess in her own right, contributed a section to this book. Another significant work belonging to this period is "Meghadutam". Narayanacharya borrowed the idea of structure from Kalidasa and gave it his own content. A political activist, languishing in prison for fighting against the injustices in the society, sends a message to his wife who lives at the other end of Andhra through a cloud. As the cloud-messenger traverses along, the poet describes the places, sights and scenes in Andhra Desa. "Meghadutam" is a fine example of Narayanacharya's stylistic and imaginative capabilities. "Meghadutam" is next only to "Sivatandavam" in its popularity and has been reprinted several times.

Bhakti brought about great changes in the life pattern of Narayanacharya. He became a devotee of the tradition of Samartha Ramadas. A by-product of this phase of his life are the musical compositions he has done. Music, being an effective medium for *Bhakti* found its natural expression in Narayanacharya and resulted in the composition of about 5,000 *kirtanas*. During this period he had a sudden impulse to renounce the world and become a *sanyasi*, which he did. Leaving his family behind, he went to the North. Living the life of a mendicant monk he wandered from place to place. He was in Benares and Nainital for sometime and did penance in the Himalayas for about two years. His wanderings finally took him to Swami Sivananda. Narayanacharya says that his meeting Swami Sivananda was a definite turning-point in his life. He dispelled Narayanacharya's doubts about godhood and was impressed with Narayanacharya's scholarship in several languages. Finally he conferred on him the title "Saraswatiputra" and asked him to return to his family and lead the life of a householder. Though Narayanacharya received several other titles before and after, he is passionately fond of the title given by Swami Sivananda. Narayanacharya went to Sri Aurobindo and spent some time with him before he finally returned home. He was deeply influenced by the intellectual quality of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy and poetry.

He returned home and completed his voluminous *Pandari Bhagavatam* containing 24,000 couplets called *dwipadas*. *Dwipada* which had been by and large a neglected form of poetry acquired a new significance at the hands of Narayanacharya and became the vehicle of graceful poetry and emotionally charged *Bhakti*. Critics feel that Narayanacharya alone has used *Dwipada* as effectively as Saivite poets and Ranganatha.

Telugu, perhaps, has produced more Ramayanas than any other language in our country. But most of them are pedantic

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and aesthetically unsatisfactory and hence none of them has become popular among the masses like the *Ramacharitamaanas* of Tulasidas. Narayanacharya decided to write a *Ramayana* "which would dance on the tongues of Telugu people" by bringing the style of the epic very close to the spoken word and making it tuneful by comprising it in *geva* metres. *Ramacharitamaanas* served him as a model in temperament and style, though he was greatly influenced by Shakespeare in his characterization. Rama is more human than divine. Angada's predicament is like that of Hamlet in his attempts to shake off the mortal coils. Kaikeyi, willingly inviting calumny, sent Rama into exile with the specific purpose of having Ravana killed hy him. Though some scholars look askance at the changes. Narayanacharya has made, we must do well to remember that he is not the first who has done it. Narayanacharya is in the distinguished company of Bhavabhuti, Saktibhadra and several others. *Janapriya Ramayanam* places Narayanacharya in the galaxy of the immortals in Telugu literature. It is a fine blend of Valmiki's love for natural phenomena and Tulasi's devotional abandon. Several crties believe that Narayana charya's *Janapriya Ramayanam* is the simplest and the most poetic Ramayana in Telugu. Sri Sri, the Marxist revolutionary poet, who dislikes the ideology of the *Ramayana*, says that he would like to read Narayanacharya's *Ramayana* for its word-music and poetry.

Srinivasa Prabandham shows Narayanacharya in a different light. He displays his erudition—both literary and philosophical—in this long poetical work containing more than 2,500 stanzas. But he carefully guards himself against dry pedanticity and makes the poem devotionally poetic, though difficult at some places.

In addition to the books discussed here, Narayanacharya has several other poetical works to his credit which in no way could be called inferior to them.

Narayanacharya has few equals as a literary critic. His career as literary critic started with *Prabandha Naayikalu*, a collection of essays on the psychological attitudes of the heroines in the court romances of the Vijayanagar period. Narayanacharya's subtle and gently-ironic humour was very much appreciated by pioneers like Rallapalli Anantakrishna Sarma. Narayanacharya's critical works on Tenali Ramakrishna and Bhattumurti brought out several hitherto undiscovered literary excellences in them. His *Mahabharata Vimarsanamu* broke new grounds in literary criticism in Telugu by attempting a sociological interpretation of the *Mahabharata* in Sanskrit. His penchant for sociological interpretation reached its zenith in his *Vijayanagara Saamaajika Charitra* (The Social History of Vijayanagar) in which he examined several

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aspects of the dynamics of feudal society through epigraphical, literary and other sources. The historians who are obsessed with the geneology of kings and the chronology of incidents should strive hard to make up leeway. The greatest achievement of Narayanacharya as a literary critic is his voluminous commentary to the *Bhagavata*. It traces the Bhagavata tradition in Indian languages and makes an indepth comparative study of the Bhagavatas in Sanskrit and Telugu. It examines every important aspect of the *Bhagavata* through the philosophical perspectives of Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhwa.

In addition to Telugu, his mother-tongue, Narayanacharya has written poetry in several other languages. In his teens, when he was a student of Oriental College in Tirupati, he used to contribute poetry to the Sanskrit journal "Udayam." His *Sivakarnamritam* containing a thousand verses is his finest work in Sanskrit. His *Tyagaraja Suprabhatam* and *Agasteeswara Suprabhatam* are also popular. Chaste idiom and chiselled expression are the hall-marks of Narayanacharya's Sanskrit poetry.

English language and literature have an irresistible charm for Narayanacharya. He holds Shakespeare, Milton and Aldous Huxley in great esteem. He does not think much of the technical innovations in modern poetry and novel as they result in excessive obscurity. Obscurity, according to Narayanacharya, should be like a thin, transparent veil and enhance the beauty behind it, but not altogether cloud it.

His collection of poems in English, *Leaves in the Wind*, was very much appreciated by Harindranath Chattopadhyaya. Recently he has written a Greek-model tragedy entitled *The Hero* based on the life of Suyodhana. He has written this play in Elizabethan English because he is of the opinion that modern English is not powerful enough to recreate a sense of ancient grandeur and convey turbulent tragic emotions. In this play Suyodhana is less despicable if not lovable. He is not a wicked and vicious monster but a capable king, artistic and humane.

Narayanacharya has done creditable translation work from other languages into Telugu and *vice-versa*. He has translated *Atharva Veda* into Telugu with an enlightening commentary. Tirupati Tirumala Devasthanams have accepted it for publication and likely to bring it out shortly. He has also translated fiction from Kannada and Urdu; drama from Malayalam and Sanskrit and poetry from several languages. His translation of Kosambi's *Bhagawan Buddha* from Hindi is well known. Narayanacharya's finest translation from Telugu is that of Viswanatha Satyanarayana's *Ekaveera* into Malayalam. It was done at the instance of Dr. Burgula Ramakrishna Rao, the then Governor

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of Kerala and was dedicated to him. It won the appreciation of Malayalam scholars and was prescribed as a text-book for degree classes by the Kerala University.

Academic honours came to Narayanacharya from outside Andhra first, in spite of his staggering scholarship in a dozen languages. Narayanacharya was rotting as a Telugu Pandit in a high school for want of university degrees when the first academic honour came to him from Kerala. The Kerala University invited him as one of the editors of their etymological dictionary, waiving the condition on educational qualifications. Narayanacharya worked in Kerala for three years with Kunjan Pillai, the famous Malayalam scholar and the chief editor of the project. During his stay in Kerala he studied *Manipravala* and *Kathakali* literatures in Malayalam and published some fine essays on them in Telugu. While he was still in Kerala he was invited as the linguistic librarian by the Central Sahitya Akademi. When Narayanacharya decided to go to Delhi, Kunjan Pillai relieved him unwillingly and said that he was sending him there as an ambassador of Malayalam culture. Narayanacharya was in Delhi for about two years. Sri Krishna Kripalani, the Secretary of the Akademi then, liked Narayanacharya's rendition of *Ramacharitamaanas* very much and would ask him to recite it in their social gatherings. But unfortunately Narayanacharya's health failed in Delhi and he was forced to come back to his high school post once again. Srl Kripalani bid him a farewell saying that the glory of the Akademi was leaving it. Later Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, conferred on him a D. Litt. degree. The same university invited him as a Visiting Professor also. Very recently (June 1987) Sri Krishnadevaraya University also conferred on him the honorary degree of D. Litt.

Narayanacharya participated in the South Indian and Indian poet's symposiums as a representative of Telugu. The Government of India honoured him with "Padmasri". Both the State and the Central Governments gave him the Best Teacher Award. The three Mathadhipatis honoured him several times for his erudition in the Vedic literature and for the great contribution he has made to Indian literature. Regardless of the honours showered on him, Narayanacharya retired as a school teacher in 1974 and lives in Cuddapah, pursuing his literary and spiritual activities as quietly as ever before.

Narayanacharya's spiritual life is an extension of his literary life. He has an intense faith in the path of *Bhakti* though he is a superlative intellectual. He firmly believes that he will have the grace of Bhagawan Srikrishna as promised to him by the senior

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Sankaracharya of Kanchi. Irrespective of what he is doing, writing or talking, he is unconsciously engaged in Japam.

Narayanacharya belongs to the line of Indian scholar-poets who kept the torch of classicism burning for centuries. But living in an age which professes an ideology different from his he has become a solitary figure. The very fact that several of his books have not been able to find a publisher shows that the future looks rather bleak for classical poetry and scholarly criticism. It is the duty of scholars, critics, governments and voluntary literary organizations to ensure that scholar-poets like Narayanacharya are supported in every way to carry on the tradition they have so greatly enriched. No help is small for him and no honour is greater than him.

GOD

T. TARSHDEV MADHAV

God has thousands of hands, thousands of eyes also
but he has not any ear !

Say to God sleeping in womb of atom-bomb
that in my house one sparrow is making nest.
What is its future ?

I am thrown, like a broken ship by
The sea named God.

With the help of stick, made of logic, image and folklore
the old God wanders on the roads without milestones !

God shines in the pupils of the eyes of the blind.

Oh ! Astrologer's sparrow
Say me the future of God !

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HAWTHORNE'S FIRST NOVEL

K. S. VENKATARAMU

Nathaniel Hawthorne's first novel, *The Scarlet Letter* (a psychological romance), is regarded today as his greatest work, although it was his second novel, *The House of the Seven Gables*, which elicited the acclaim of his contemporaries. In fact, Hawthorne himself said that the latter work was more characteristic of him, and more natural for him to write than *The Scarlet Letter*.

Before considering the reasons for the unfading popularity of *The Scarlet Letter*, it may be a good idea to summarise its incidents, which are as follows :

Hester Prynne, a woman of Boston in its early days, is subjected to disciplinary action by the court for bearing a child out of wedlock. She is condemned to stand in the pillory and ordered to wear henceforth, as a token of her shame, the scarlet letter "A", attached to her bosom. She carries her child to the pillory. Its other parent is known only to her and no one else.

Separated by her husband, Roger Chillingworth in Europe, Hester precedes him by ship across the Atlantic. She is labouring under the impression that he has been lost forever. But he has actually been thrown by shipwreck in a forest, and reappears at the scene where his wife is being tried for her sin. He at once decides to search for her guilty partner ; and being a person of cold, calculative nature, he devotes his life thereafter for this revengeful purpose with single-minded determination.

In course of time he becomes suspicious of Arthur Dimmesdale, the young clergyman of the town, who is a person of "devout sensibility and warmth of heart". Chillingworth, in the guise of an experienced physician, makes friends with Dimmesdale and remains by his side ostensibly to watch over him and protect his health. But not much longer he makes his evil intention known to the clergyman, and begins to torture him by indirect hints of his having detected the latter's secret misdemeanourt while all the while impressing the parishioners with his clever

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simulation of sympathy and solicitude towards their beloved Priest.

The child Pearl plays a minor but indispensable role of binding " the interests of the parties together ". The few other characters in the novel are personages who are typical products of the manners and customs of the period. But, as Evert A. Duychinck has pointed out in his review of the book, the scarlet letter " A " acquires almost the characteristic of the " hero of the volume. " It becomes as vitalised as the rest of the characters " in Hawthorne's hands, skilled to these allegorical, typical semblances ". The letter " matures in its meaning through its relationship to Hester, Pearl, and the community ". The story ends with the death of the clergyman Dimmesdale during a public festival, after he makes an open confession in the arms of the condemned woman, Hester.

The popularity of *The Scarlet Letter* more than a century and a quarter after its publication in 1850, does not admit of a simple explanation ; for as some one has said, " No one can say what makes a book a classic. " We can, however, identify three probable reasons for *The Scarlet Letter* acquiring the status of a classic, and its appeal to the modern general reader. (1) The modern reader is interested in reading it for historical or sociological reasons rather than for literary reasons. (2) It instructs us as to the attitude of nineteenth century New Englanders towards their Puritan ancestors. These reasons are, however, obviously inadequate ; for the historical and sociological factors are of interest only to the scholar and the social historian, while Hawthorne's belief concerning the attitude of his contemporaries towards their Puritan ancestors appears quite vague and uncertain.

The third and perhaps the only plausible reason for the popularity of *The Scarlet Letter* is, therefore, its artistic excellence, from the point of view of structure, charaterisation and treatment of the theme. We have also, of course, to consider the timelessness of the environmental community and moral problems which Hawthorne has dealt with in his work.

As regards the structure of the novel, it is so inconspicuous, that we can recognise its unity, only after we have carefully read the book and reflected on it. As Anthony Trollope says, in order to appreciate "the incredible unity of *The Scarlet Letter*, it is necessary to read the novel through, for only then can we see how well it holds together." And this structural unity is achieved by " the consistent darkness of the mood ", which Hawthorne feared would make his novel unpalatable to the general reader. But the depressing effect of the darkness of

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the mood is neutralised by the dramatic element in the structure of the novel, which, unlike the narrative aspect (as in most novels), gives one the unique experience of participating in the action.

The superb craftsmanship that Hawthorne displays in the technique of characterisation makes one remember Hester, Dimmesdale, Chillingworth and the child Pearl, even long after the incidents of the novel have receded into the inner regions of one's memory. Even the names of the characters are quite significant. The coldness of Chillingworth and the confusion in the mind of Dimmesdale, engendered by his indiscretion, are unmistakable.

In the treatment of the theme, Hawthorne displays the same unwillingness to simplify, as in the construction of structure and delineation of character. In the words of Robert Donald Spector, "....his attitude toward his subject matter, his use of structure, and his development of characterisation were extremely complex, and because this complexity characterises every part of the novel, just as it does the ordinary business of life, critics have been unable to agree on the precise meaning of his work."

ARE YOU HERE STILL ?

"KIVI"

When I think that you are gone, gone indeed,
To where legs do not reach

Nor eyes follow, nor eyes touch
On, Are you here, within me

Embraced by my thoughts
Entombed in my heart

As a silent fount

As a thin thread,
As a tiny atom,
Are you

Are you here, within me ?

Translated from Tamil by Bala.

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NEHRU AS A GREAT HISTORIAN

Dr. Ch. M. NAIDU

To write a book on history not merely for academicians but also for general readers is not an easy job. If the book is to be written by some impulse or accident by a non-historian, say, a scientist or engineer, it is still further a challenging and painstaking one. Now-a-days people's tendency is to multiply their earnings in as many ways as possible, and so a book on history, let it be one on national movement or a great ruler, would not create any interest in them. On the other hand, they look down upon it as only a corpus of hard facts having no relevance to the day-to-day life. Even Hitler, who thundered Europe during the Second World War, was no exception and called it a bunk. But Jawaharlal Nehru, a student of science and law, queerly took a different viewpoint and interest in it during his incarceration in the freedom movement. He may not be a Rankian type of historian but wrote monumental books like *Glimpses of World History*, *Autobiography* and *Discovery of India*, converting the dry facts in history into lively thoughts with interaction as in other social sciences.

But many wondered as to what his objective was in writing them. Did he intend them for future generations? He does not clarify but it seems to be that he wanted to study the past and escape, if there was tyranny, from it or otherwise bring back its warmth and add with the present. He might not have established new theories or settled old controversies but was interested in understanding the background of past, particularly the thought and logic behind every event to the envy of professional historians. His racy and ritzy style was such that a few are endowed with that gift. Yet some may complain that his works were not written in better history but at least in better English. But Tom Wintringram corrects it, saying that they were not only in better English but were better history.

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The fact is that Nehru had no formal training in history either at college or university but he was attracted to it inexplicably during freedom movement. The British Raj might have contended that it awarded a benefitting punishment to him by sending to jail several times but this proved to be a blessing in disguise for him. He felt like doing some service to Clio, though he was well aware that it involved some task in consulting documents in archives, collecting them "like fishes from the fishmonger's slab" analysing and synthesising them in a proper setting. Nevertheless, depending upon his razor-edge-like memory, he jotted down points from whatever secondary sources that were supplied at will by superintendents of jails at Naini, Bareilly, and Dehra Dun. Yet he was shrewd enough not to lose sight of every important event, particularly the cause and nature behind and entered it either in his notes or stamped in memory. Being endowed with philosophical outlook and genius and acquainted with many foreign languages like French, Greek and Latin, he, like Bertrand Russell, could have chosen creative and freelance writing as a profession but he was determined to do some new intellectual pursuits with a message to humanity. But he was well aware that to write a book on history it involved consulting original sources in archives and this was the reason why he neglected a few areas like South Indian and Muslim periods, but it does not reflect his fads and fancies. In fact he was modest, sincere and never fancied to be called a historian, though he was above normal academic historians. As he writes, "I am not a man of letters ...I am not a historian; what indeed am I?...I have been a dabbler in many things."

But the question is how a scientist and a lawyer like him could undertake this "spiritual adventure", since the books supplied were meagre and at times were withdrawn while he was still engaged in deep reading. Once he narrates his exasperating experience thus: "In Lucknow District Gaol and for over a month I lived with Gibbon for a close companion, wrapped up in the images of past that his language evoked. I was suddenly discharged before I had quite finished the book. The charm was broken...the hundred or so pages that remained." Yet since he was an extraordinary man what he read was well absorbed in his inner conscience in a way that he could recollect at just an inkling, analyse and supplement with what he jotted in notes, and next present them cumulatively in a style that a few could emulate him. It may be that his writings suggest an overdose of speculative musings in an anxiety to find out the logic behind each event but the truth is that in his works the past, that is often considered to be dry, pulsates with life and looks like

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being re-enacted with life. For example, many people see the Gautama Buddha's statues in sitting posture but Nehru describes one of them very picturesquely thus: "Seated on the lotus flower, calm and impassive, above passion and desire, beyond the storm and strife of the world so far away, he seems out of reach, unattainable. His eyes are closed, but some power of the spirit looks out of them and a vital energy fills the frame." A conventional historian may not accept it as being allegorical and superfluous, but Nehru never twisted or distorted the fact but highlighted Buddha's charisma and thus provoked the attention and interest of the reader.

Besides being thus poetical, Nehru made serious discussions like a conventional historian how Buddha revolted against the practice of religion and the popular beliefs, why his religion expedited the growth of otherwordliness in India for a number of years and why it declined in India but not in the neighbouring countries like China, Japan and Burma, and thus towards the end muses, "When it goes of at a tangent from the curve of life, it loses contact with social needs, and the distance between it and life grows, it loses all its vitality and significance."

When a scientist and lawyer was thus changed into a philosophical historian, one questions as to who inspired him and whether there was anyone behind him. Though it is not convincing, he himself admits in the preface of his *Glimpses of World History* that it was H. G. Wells, the British novelist and a writer of scientific fiction, who was the source of inspiration. But in practice there is much nuance between both. While Wells had got ample facilities to consult the original sources, Nehru due to imprisonment had not such access. With whatever secondary sources that were supplied to him, he, relying on his incredible memory, wrote world history not like Wells for adults but in the form of letters to a school girl, Indira Priyadarsini, who later became the world-famous Indira Gandhi. But one bewilders whether those letters, that deal with high philosophical digressions, were really palatable to a school girl of just 13 years.

Yet a common feature between Wells and Nehru is that both deal with the evolution of man from barbarianism to the modern civilisation but Nehru rather self-introspectively punctuated at times with quotations from French, Greek and Latin literatures. However, he amply fulfils what G. M. Trevelyan requires from a historian: "We get a glimpse that the curtain of old might with some brilliantly lighted scenes of living men, women, not mere creatures of fiction and imagination but warm blooded realities even as we are. They who were gone are still here" though hidden they are revealed; though dead they yet speak.;

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Further, Nehru did not have a bias like Wells or other European writers to give excessive importance to Western countries. In spite of his being brought up in western universities like Cambridge, Nehru was not obsessed with the charm of western civilisation but tried to do justice to Eastern countries very balancedly. As he said, " Don't think that I am trying to praise India or China at the expense of the West. There is nothing to shout about in the condition of India or China today, and even the blind can see that with all their past greatness, they have sunk low in the scale of nations...We may feel pleased at the continuity of our civilisation, but there is small comfort when that civilisation itself has run to seed. " Since the letters had got such intrinsic worth and having realised them, Nehru's sister Smt. Vijayalakshmi Pandit preserved them in tact, lest they would have gone to dustbin just like other letters from a father to a daughter.

In spite of his frequent imprisonment, unlike most other academic historians, Nehru visited as many historical places like Ajanta, Ellora, Indus Valley as possible and derived a great deal of inspiration or, so to say, experienced a sort of transcendental meditation. In this respect he may be compared with Sri Aurobindo who practised such meditation, or Herodotus, the first Greek historian, who similarly, to produce an authentic book on the wars between Greeks and Persians, went to the areas where carnage took place. Edward Gibbon, the British historian, also was another who went to Rome to write *The Decline and Fall of Roman Empire.*

Still Nehru's approach was ambivalent. He did not pursue the Rankian mode of giving footnotes at the end of a page so as to enable the reader to verify the authenticity of his views or to have further discussion. Yet he evinced a spirit of universalism, rationalism, and morality in his works. They may not be prescribed as text or reference books but constitute an extension of liberal university education. As Nehru says, " There is an unfortunate mixture of elementary writing for the young and a discussion at times of the ideas of grown-ups...They are superficial sketches joined together by a thin thread. It was my intention to have these letters revised by a competent historian. " Even K. M. Panikkar, a top-ranking diplomat and historian, admits that Nehru's works reflect a good deal of " disarming and excessive modesty " besides creative ideas in flowery language.

Thus many compare Nehru with Wells but the more apt emulation may be made with B. G. Tilak, who wrote a dissertation on the origin of Aryans in Mandalay islands just like a conventional historian, though by profession he was a lawyer. His

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verbosity and scholarship are obvious but as he was confined to a micro aspect, he must have required one type of books, and that too limited. But Nehru's work was onerous, covering a wide range and unlike Wells it was impossible to consult extensively all types of sources but relied mostly on his memory and self-confidence. Yet he quoted to the wonder of historians, the dates of wars, treaties and important events with perfect accuracy. What biographies he read about great leaders like Alexander, Napoleon and Jhansi Lakshmi Bai, it is difficult to say, but the thoughts he brought about on each mystifies the professional historians. As in a novel or drama or like Phoenix from ashes the great leaders are brought back to life. As Nehru says, " If you look upon history with the eye of sympathy the dry bones will fill up with flesh and blood, and you will see a mighty procession of men and women and children in every age and every clime different from us and yet very like us, with much the same human virtues and human failings. " So while to a layman or vitriolic critic of history the past is a heap of dry facts, Nehru, like Walter Pater or H. A. L. Fisher or Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre, threads the facts in a logical sequence and next presents them in a philosophical way. However, his emphasis is more on the ethos of Indian civilisation and culture in the case of Asian history and of Asia in the case of world history.

Incidentally his role in the freedom movement also helped him to present a clear and reliable perspective of the past. In this respect his *Autobiography* may be called another name for freedom movement so far 1920s and 1930s are concerned. Like Sir Winston Churchill who participated in the Second World War and wrote masterly volumes, Nehru, being aware of the pros and cons of every major event in the freedom movement, did not feel an urgency to consult original sources in archives and at the same time presented with sympathy and without snook. In fact he wrote the *Autobiography* as a dialogue between the past and present or the events that just preceded him and those that occurred before his eye.

But in doing this dialogue Nehru, unlike Carlyle, was never infatuated by the puissant leaders like Alexander, Nepoleon and Hitler, their blitzkrieg wars and exploits but equally paid attention to the services of ordinary men who stood behind those generals and extended their sincere and whole-hearted support. Perhaps Carlyle's conception of great men was different. For example, Russian Revolution was dominated by Vladimir Lenin, American War of Independence by George Washington, and Indian freedom movement since World War I by M. K. Gandhi and these great men were of a different class who championed new ideas, worked

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for the emancipation of ordinary and frustrated men and thus became torch-bearers to humanity. Perhaps since Nehru visited the socialist countries of Europe in 1928, his conception of mankind was changed. Like Karl Marx, he felt that the common man was equally important because a great man minus the co-operation of an ordinary man would prove to be like a square peg in a round hole.

Some may complain that he thinks and exists only for bread and butter but there is nothing wrong since existence is primary. Yet their co-operation releases dynamic forces and not only helps the great men to achieve miracles but changes the course of the destiny of the countries. Alexander might be a great general, having conquered a vast stretch of land between Greece and India but once his soldiers felt home-sickness and revolted, he could not go ahead but returned. But some Western historians twisted this fact and say that he went back weeping as if he had nothing to conquer. But Nehru corrects this, saying that he had a lot of world to conquer and he went nowhere near the great country China.

Similarly Nehru was critical of Nepoleon and quotes a French poet by name Barbier that the Little Corporal exploited France only so long as he was hale and healthy but once his mental calibre was imbalanced, he was finished. But the truth is if such generals were great it was because times were favourable and ordinary men were compelled but real great men are those who championed new ideas and strove for the common man. As Nehru says, history is "not just a record of the doings of big men, of kings and emperors and the like. If it were so, history might be as well shut up now; for kings and emperors have almost ceased to strut about the world's stage."

Thus Nehru as an historian tried to elicit the logic and thought behind every event. He may be a dreamer in bringing about the sequence of facts and his language almost lyrical but every word of his is pregnant with meaning and exerts tremendous impact on the readers. One may again say that his presentation was like a fairy tale but his mode of investigating facts was no less equal to that of a scientific researcher. His epilogue to the *Discovery of India* may be poetic, philosophical, and imaginative but shows his dedication and modesty to convey a message to humanity. As he writes, "The discovery of India, what have I discovered? Today she is four hundred million separate individual men and women, each differing from the other....Yet something has bound them together and binds them still. She is a myth and an idea, a dream and a vision, and yet very real and present and pervasive. India will find herself again when

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freedom opens out new horizons, and the future with them fascinate her far more than the immediate past of frustration and humiliation." It is strange that within two years since he wrote this, he became the Prime Minister of independent India. Does it mean that he had a premonition that India would become free and independent?

However, he may not be a conventional historian but was a romantic historian; may not have pursued science as a profession but applied scientific thinking in investigating the facts in history; may not become a poet but was poetic in presenting facts in a majestic style. On the whole his compilation of historical facts reads more like a fairy tale, rousing and absorbing the attention of readers. Thus his spiritual adventure in writing a work on history is both science and an art and gives a new dimension to history. As Voltaire says, "If you have anything to tell us except that one barbarian succeeds another on the banks of the Oxus and Jaxartes, what is it to us?

PRAYER

Dr. SANKARA SREE RAMA RAO

Amidst deafening noises
I strain my ears to hear thy Divine music
Blinded by the mist of Maya
I try to cast a look at thy Divine form
With a wavering and mischievous mind
I struggle to concentrate on thy Divine reality
Surrounded by foul and disgusting odours
I very much desire to catch thy Divine perfume
Scratched all over by the roughness of life
I yearn for thy Divine touch
Like a delicate flower in a thorny bush
I send out the perfume of love to you
Through the wind of constant prayer.

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The Life and Poetry of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu

A. V. D. SARMA

A poet, patriot, orator and wit all made into one was Mrs. Sarojini Naidu. Born on 13th February 1879, she is better remembered as the "Nightingale of India," as Gurudev Tagore hailed her, than as the governor of a province which post she occupied at the time of her death in 1949.

Her life and poetry are interesting and instructive. In politics and poetry she has gone like a meteor in flaming splendour from success to success. But she was by no means a plaster saint; a woman of rich emotional nature, of aesthetic sensibility and strong impulses, it was not always roses and roses in all her way. The triumphs and tragedies of her life are amply reflected in her poetry. They were like haunting echoes of a grand symphony which can never be forgotten. Hindu by birth, she was brought up in constant touch with Muhammadans in the city of Hyderabad. Consequently one of the passions that governed her life was Hindu-Muslim unity. She also desired to stretch out hands of fellowship to the Western world, with the culture and civilization of which she came into touch at an early age.

Her father, Dr. Agorenath Chattopadhyaya was a doyen among educationalists of the old Hyderabad state. It was to him she owed her early training in life and poetry. In her preface to *Golden Threshold* Sarojini said that "she came out as a full bloom linguist" out of the room in which her father shut her in her childhood as a reprove. Dr. Chattopadhyaya was, in his daughter's very words, a "great dreamer of dreams." In "Salutations to my father's spirit" she addressed him thus:

"Farewell farewell, O brave and tender sage
O mystic jester, golden-hearted child
Selfless, serene, untroubled, unbeguiled
By trivial snares of grief and greed and rage
splendid dreams, in a dreamless age

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In 1895 at her sixteenth year, she was sent to Europe to begin her travels and studies in England, France, and Italy. Her marriage in December 1898 to Dr. Govindarajulu Naidu, was unique in those days as it was both inter-caste and inter-state and thus naturally evoked considerable opposition from all quarters.

Poetry was her first love. I quote her: "While I live, it will always be the supreme desire of my life to write poetry — one poem, one line of enduring verse even." Prior to her, there were women who blazed across Indo-Anglian poetry, notably the Dutt sisters. But while with the latter even the thought seems to be imbued with the Western ideal the poetry of Mrs. Naidu breathes the Indian atmosphere. Edmund Goose, who in Sarojini's language showed her the way to the Golden Threshold of poetry, was convinced that she became a genuine Indian poet, not a machine-made imitator of the English classics. In his introduction to her first volume of poetry *Golden Threshold* published in 1905, Arthur Symon observed that "her poems hint at a rare temperament, a temperament of the women of the East, finding expression through western language." Her mastery over English rhymes and meters has made her poetry a harmonious blending of East and West.

Her poem "Palanquin Bearers" which runs as follows is an example revealing her mastery over poetic feeling and lyric expression.

"Lightly. O lightly we bear her along
She sways like a flower in the wind of our song
She skims like a bird on the seam of a stream,
She floats like a laugh from the lips of a dream
Gaily, O gaily we glide and we sing
We bear her along like a pearl on a string"

She was a lyricist of high order and her poems are more painted words than thoughts. With a brush dipped in the colours of the rainbow, she painted the picture of an Indian dancer.

"Eyes ravished with rapture celestially painting
What passionate bosoms aflaming with fire
Drink deep of the husk of the hyacinth heaven
The glimmer around them in fountains of light"

Her "Persian Love Song" concludes thus:

"Hourly this subtle mystery flowers anew,
O love, I know not why...
Unless it be, perchance, that I am you,
Dear love, that you are I"

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The Bird of Time her second volume of poetry came out in 1912. It was a chronicle of her reaction to the joys and sorrows of life. Within four years *The Broken Wing* another anthology followed, evidencing the premonitions of a passionate and broken heart. "The Feather of the Dawn" published posthumously, also speaks of unrequited love and of various aspects of unattainable quest. Her later outlook on life may be gleaned by reading a few lines from the "Feather of the Dawn":

"Life gave me joy and song for dower
Laughter and grace and shining fame,
Hope like a forest tree in flower
Dreams with reverberant wings of flame.
God troubled in His high domain
sent you, O Love, from starry spheres
With quick and ardent gifts or pain
To teach me tears, to teach me tears."

One would agree with Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyar in describing Sarojini as a poet who embodied and typified the discovery of the inner-self of the poet in a limitless world for private exploration. She must have looked into her own heart when she sung:

"Let us rise, O my heart, let us go
Where the twilight is calling,
Far away from the sound of this lonely
and menacing crowd
To the glens, to the glades, where the
magical darkness is falling,
In rivers of gold from the breast of a
radiant cloud
Come away, come away from this song
and its tumult of sorrow
There is rest, there is peace from the
pang of its manifold strife,
Where the halcyon might hold in trust
the dear songs of the morrow
And the silence is but a rich pause
in the music of life"

From the year 1917, Sarojini Naidu signalised herself in the forefront of political struggle for the independence of her motherland. She made a passionate call to her mother to awake:

"Waken, O Mother thy children implore thee,
Who kneel in thy presence to serve and adore thee
The night is afresh with a dawn of the morrow,
Why still clost thou sleep in thy bondage of sorrow,

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Awaken and sever the woes that enthral us
And hallow our hands for the triumphs that call us
... ...
Lo, we would thrill the high stars with thy story,
And set thee again in the forefront of glory."

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu was a picturesque adventurer in the high seas of Indian politics. In the words of Margaret E. Cousins, in politics she stood for the Ruskin's ideal of a woman being the inspirer and guide. Yet, she became a stalwart in the Indian Freedom Movement, stood shoulder to shoulder with the other lieutenants of Gandhiji and shared his confidence. As president of the Madras Provincial Congress, as member of Subjects Committee of the National Congress, as elected President of the Indian National Congress in 1925, and as participant in Round Table Conferences, she vastly displayed her capacities for organization, comradeship and political wisdom. On the platform she was a splendid speaker comparable to the silver-tongued orator, V. S. Srinivasa Sastry. Endowed with a mellifluous voice, her poetic soul often found expression in her oratory. Her oratory was like the warblings of a sweet-throated bird, swift and spontaneous. She played with words, and words flowed from her as from a fountain. It has been observed that her speeches reminded one of the sensuous beauty which one felt in the sinuous forms of the medieval Indian sculpture.

She was an artist in words, a painter of sparkling and colourful phrases. Her legendary sense of humour must have been a source of relief to her colleagues during some of the bleak days of freedom struggle. Perhaps she was the only one who could crack jokes with and at the expense of Gandhiji. Gandhiji was to her "a micky mouse of man", Sardar Patel "the Bardoli bull", and Pandit Nehru, the "Prince Charming". Once she persuaded Gandhiji to play a game of ping pong with her. That must have been an impressive sight! The Father of the Nation and the Nightingale of India facing each other across a table tennis net.

In her times. she was the spokeswoman of her own sex. Firstly by leading a deputation to the Viceroy on behalf of the Indian women in Fiji, and later as the leader of the All India Women's Deputation to Montague, the then Secretary of State for India, she fully identified herself with the claim for the political franchise for Indian women. Her Memorandum to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on the desirability of granting political equality to Indian women, was regarded as a remarkable combination of the prose of fact with the idealism of the poetry. Her address at the conference of International Women Suffrage Alliance

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held in Geneva, altered the false ideas concerning the conditions and capacities of Indian women.

In her foreword to *Women in Modern India*, Sarojini Naidu observed that "the mission of womanhood remains indivisible all over the world, but the woman of every race must naturally seek to interpret and fulfil her share in accordance with her own vision and version of national life. The Indian woman of today, whatever her creed or community, is clearly imbibed and inspired by a profound renascent consciousness of her special and long-forgotten place and purpose, privilege and responsibility in creating and sustaining auspicious and enduring conditions of national progress and international fellowship." Thus Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, proved herself a unique link between the great heroines of the past and free and progressive womanhood of today. She was the nightingale who sang of India's freedom. As such, she would continue to be a source of inspiration to the coming generations.

TO MY MAN ABROAD

Basavaraju Rajyalakshmamma

It's
so cold
and
so dark

The stars
glimmer
here and there.

This dead of night
alone
in what strange lands
are you
worrying
darling ?

This silent night
can you hear
my song
of tears ?

Translated from Telugu by B. V. L. Narayana Row

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TYAGARAJU — A JEEVANMUKTA

MAHALINGA PADMANABHAN

"Those who sing here sing God," said the great Sankara, and the Vishnupurana would have it that "All songs are part of him who wears the form of sound."

Tyagayya did sing God in all his songs. Music was to him a venicle par excellence at that. And if it is not and is but an entertainment it was useless even if the song was in praise of him. Music is endowed with an intuitive power of generating Vedantic ecstasy.

"Devotion-nectar with the notes seven blent
is heavenly bliss, Oh mind.

What is fragrance of the lotus to
The frog and crane that frolic on it?

To know the notes seven from Mooladhara
Ring through centres vital in all their
Glory is liberation!

Many an incarnation after does
The seer *knowledge* attains. But
To know the Ragas with Bhakti natural
Is liberation-while-living!

Is beating the drum with no knowledge
Of time and beat, music felicitous? So is
Worship with no pure mind—a Sookavritti.

Tyagayya knows in depth the quality of
The notes, their nuances subtle
That to Parvati Siva imparted. Oh mind
Learn it from him and prosper!

(*Ragasudharasa*)

With Tyagayya "there is no transmutation of an idea into a song. But his was a kind of musical thought." Again,

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Knowledge of music full and its science
Is to be in a state as He, Oh mind,
And when with *Rama Story* an
Ocean of Rasa erotic and the eight.
Full of love devotion, love of the good
Rama's grace, conduct, righteousness and
Sangiṭa Sastra Gnanamu, orthodox
Fame and prosperity and all, Oh mind!

(*Sangeeta sastra jnanamu*)

In another piece, he asks :

"Is salvation possible to one who
Is not liberation-while-living achieved?

How, Oh thou present before me,
With no knowledge of music?

Proficiency in Veena, of what avail
If they know not notes seven arising
From fusion of Prana with the elements,
The Sivaṭatva?

(Mokshamu Galada)

The acme of this experience is found crystallised in the Kriti:

The nectar of sound is He in human form
His nectar bliss of melody which is
But that of the Vedas
Notes seven his bow bells,
The Raga his bow,
The singing styles His bow string three
The course of song the arrow
His speech, ever appropriate
The nuance in the song,
No fortune, then, is greater than
To praise him ever long

(Nadasudharasambilanu)

To Tyagayya Rama was, perhaps, more "The nectar of sound in human form" than the "Personification of Dharma" (*Ramo vigrahavan dharma*").

The concept of Jeevanmukta is as old as the Hindu religion and religious thought and achievement. Yet there are many who, let alone the probability, aceptic of its possibility in occurrence or experience or realisation. We take it and treat it as an ideal and therefore not practical and remain and must remain only in the texts and to be only aimed at.

But to Tyagayya it was different. It came to him naturally. He was not giving while speaking of it expression to the intellectual

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comprehension of an ideal. Nor was his the report of a feeling and a faithful one at that. It was just a recording of an experience, a fealty. If one could take to music as Tyagayya did and sing as he sang, it is certain Rama would present himself before him as the great Professor R. Swaminathan often used to say.

To conclude, as Yeats says, "Indian music, though its theory is elaborate and its technique so difficult, it is not an art but life itself. For it is the inner reality of things, rather than any transient or partial experience that the singer voices." Those who sing here sing God and Tyagayya did and in the process became one with the One and the only One though identified for the moment as Rama.

AFTERNOON WALK

R. SUNDARESAN

Shadows of persons
restlessly pacing the balcony
in the afternoon
weirdly spread on the street;
the town sleeps, the sun, the trees, the birds on the trees are drowsy;
a wayside Anjaneya standing with eternally folded hands
musingly glances
at the monkey
thrusting a rotten banana into the mouth of its beggar-master
lying on torn, hot sacks;
an eversilver vessel vendor's voice reverberates;
the drowsy servers of a tea-shop shake out of their seats,
a vegetable shop-owner excitedly opens the shutters to begin sale,
women come out with pails to fetch milk for afternoon coffee,
birds begin to circle in the sky.

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REVIEWS

The Gandhian Way : By Amlan Datta. The Director of Publications, North Eastern Hill University, Midland Compound, Gowri Road, Shillong-3. Price : Rs. 20.

Professor Amlan Datta belongs to the North-Eastern Hill University and has himself led a Gandhian way of life. His devotion to the principles of the Mahatma which held his soul in integrity have influenced the professor to the extent of making deep studies of the fundamental basis of the Gandhian way of life as also analyse the perspectives which guided the Mahatma while alive.

Four lectures are recorded in this volume under four heads which easily tell their tales of how scientifically the author tries to divide his topics. In the first lecture he traces Gandhiji's criticism of the industrial society which has come to stay. His remedy is not in a total destruction of what has obtained during the age of science and technology, but his suggestion or rather his belief is more to reduce the centralisation of power, a strong beauracracy, a materialistic ethic and culture and a strong competitive spirit. His belief that a centralisation of this kind can only base itself on violence, needs no repetition here. Gandhi felt that those belonging to commanding heights in society should perform their functions in a spirit of Trusteeship, and to effect such an outlook, public opinion should be trained enough to make this obligatory.

In the second lecture on parliamentary democracy, Gandhiji's views on the parliamentary system are explained. Gandhiji only conceded to parliamentary system as better than other systems which are worse. He placed a high price on individual freedom which, according to him, runs the risk of compromise in preserving party loyalty. Under any circumstance moral consciousness has to be kept in tact which may prove difficult for an individual in a party. If at all he could try to save his freedom, it can only be done by his efforts to suffer in attempting change of mind

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within the party. Gandhiji also suggested decentralising politically down to the level of the village Panchayat of governance which alone could save people from corruption with high stakes in elections. In the third lecture, National Integration, which today is the raging problem, could be only restored, according to the Mahatma, by the non-violent method or Satyagraha of wedding Love with Truth. The leadership of an individual or a group not belonging to any party but with high ideals of selflessness and a sense of mission, which on occasions should rise to cleanse the evils in order to gain a better order in society. National integration cannot be easily secured in a country like India with its various castes and creeds constantly conflicting with each other, unless a band of workers with no personal motives, work for peace and freedom from corruption of every kind and variety. Soul-force engendered in an individual could do more than all talks of peace and unity in solving such problems. The last chapter on "Gandhi and God" gives in a nutshell Gandhiji's favourite belief of Truth as more than even love-making for slipperiness in life.

These lectures on the whole preserve a unity of Gandhiji's thought, philosophy and action interpreted with great clarity and conviction. They are free of over-elaboration and the very brevity add beauty to the expression.

— K. CHANDRASEKHARAN

Structural Depths of Indian Thought : By P. T. Raju. South Asian Publishers, Daryaganj, New Delhi-2. Price : Rs. 73.

Modelled on the *History of Philosophy* by the German historian, W. Windelband, this latest work of Dr. Raju is of significance not only to teachers and students at the universities but also for the general reader who is interested in the spirit and drive of Indian philosophy. The author explains that Indian Philosophy has been clubbed with religion in the academic circles of the West and therefore its thought-content has not received as much attention as it should have. His approach to the subject is to keep out the element of religion as far as possible and delve into the profundities of the Indian mind, keeping in view, however, the interest in life-values on the part of the system-builders. He underlines the importance of the Mimamsa system particularly because it has provided the general basis for social organisation in India. That this philosophy is action-oriented but also ethic-based is emphasised.

Beginning with the ideas of the Upanishads, he studies the main principles of each system, Charvaka, Jainism, Buddhism,

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Nyaya, Vaiseshika, Sankhya, Yoga, Vedanta schools, Saivism, Saktism, Bhagavadgita and takes a brief look at contemporary thinkers like Radhakrishnan, Sri Aurobindo, Tagore, etc. He notes the increasing preoccupation of modern philosophers with the problems of social life, their attempts to dilute the meaning of *maya*. He posits the truth of *aham* (I-am) which is the basis of "freedom, responsibility, duty." It is also the supreme goal.

This work represents Dr. Raju's maturity at its highest and will surely influence evaluation of Indian Thought for a long time.

— M. P. PANDIT

1) No Other Path to go 2) Truth, Beauty and Goodness : Both by Radha Burnier. Theosophical Publishing House, Madras-20. Price : Rs. 17-25 and Rs. 16-25.

With a strong Krishnamurthian flavour, these writings which appeared originally in the *Theosophist*, throw light on many of the problems that the mind is confronted with when one takes to spiritual life. It is emphasised, first, that there is no set path in this domain for everyone to follow. Each one has to discover his direction. The journey is not smooth ; there are stages of preparation, purification, illumination and arrival. Purity of motive, feeling and action is a must. Gurus are insisted upon by tradition but unless the seeker is ready, the Guru can do little. To seek for personal salvation is indeed selfish ; to invoke the Truth of Love and surrender oneself to this Love of God *in* the world, in this creation at all levels, becomes the heroic spirit.

In most of the spiritual traditions, especially those of the ascetic variety, there is a total shunning of the aesthetic element in life. The second publication emphasises the need of perceiving Beauty in external Nature and building beauty in the inner. Satyam, Sivam, Sundaram—thus is defined the goal of the awakened man. Radha Burnier underlines the truth that beauty is not only of form ; there is a beauty of thought, beauty of feeling, beauty of conduct. Goodness is Beauty in action. All the three verities are to be cultivated by Right Living, a conscious effort to harmonise all movements of the being, within and without.

Both the books are feeders to the spiritual evolution of consciousness.

— M. P. PANDIT

The Future Poetry : By Sri Aurobindo. Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry. Price : Rs. 40.

Sri Aurobindo's creative consciousness was illumined by the Sun of his Realisation and hence his writings on Yoga, philosophy,

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literature and criticism are all of a piece. If his Yoga posited the emergence of the Gnostic Being, the series of essays that grew out of his review of J. H. Cousins's *New Ways in English Literature* explicated how this new man would evolve his own literary theory of the Gnostic Age. Subsequently published as *The Future Poetry*, this study of poetry is a connoisseur's delight. Both poetic theory and history of poetry find niches in its vast spaces and the Orient and the Occident come together as an overwhelming cascade of wonderful English prose.

The first part is generally about the heritage of English poetry. Poetic expression at its best — in whatever language — is Mantric and that is possible only when the highest intensity of rhythmic movement, interwoven verbal form and thought-substance, and the soul's vision of truth meet and become indissolubly one. Sri Aurobindo opines that among modern European tongues it is the English language which has produced "the most rich and naturally powerful poetry." Shakespeare is, of course, the one great and genuine dramatic poet...He stands out too as quite unique in his spirit, method and quality." Sri Aurobindo is aware of Shakespeare's limitations too. "He is not primarily an artist, a poetic thinker or anything else of the kind." Sri Aurobindo's overview brings us up to Meredith and Phillips, A. E., and Yeats. He bids welcome to Walt Whitman's poetry that sends forward "an arclight of prophetic expression on what is at the very heart of the new movement of humanity."

The "new movement of humanity" according to Sri Aurobindo will be towards an increasingly intuitive mind. The poetry of the future would reflect this, bring back the Mantric utterance of the Vedic times and embody the same in the common life and action of man. Thus will life here be transformed into life divine as man's poetic vision comes forward to help his spiritual realisation :

"It is in effect a larger cosmic vision, a realising of the god-head in the world and in man, of his divine possibilities as well of the greatness of the power that manifests in what he is, a spiritualised uplifting of his thought and feeling and sense and action, a more developed psychic mind and heart, a truer and deeper insight into his nature and the meaning of the world, a calling of diviner potentialities and more spiritual values into the intention and structure of his life that is the call upon humanity, the prospect offered to it by the slowly unfolding and now more clearly disclosed Self of the universe".

— Dr. Prema Nandakumar

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The Rise of the Religious Significance of Rama : By Frank Whaling. Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi-7. Price : Rs. 100.

This is not just another book on Valmiki's Ramayana, but one with a distinction. This is a study of three texts, Valmiki's Ramayana, Adhyatma Ramayana, and Ramacharita-manas of Tulasi Das. " Rise of religious significance of Rama ", as found and viewed historically, symbolically and theologically, in the three texts is the main theme of this work. Western historical objective method, and Indian traditional approach are harmoniously welded together in this study. A sympathetic understanding of Indian point of view runs throughout as an undercurrent. A comparative study of Rama, Krishna and Christ is another special feature of this work.

Summaries of the three texts, backgrounds to the latter two Ramayanas, and deviations from Valmiki's Ramayana therein are given. Historically the three texts represent stages in the growth of Rama tradition Symbolically, Rama was at first a man ideal in all respects, an incarnation of Dharma, then a succession to Indra, then Avatar of Vishnu and deeper still Brahman, the Absolute. Theological development also by stages is similarly shown. Presentation of the growth in the symbolic representation of Rama, the author claims, is his major contribution to the subject.

All the statements throughout the text are substantiated by appropriate quotations or references from the texts.

In his preface to the book Prof. Ingalls rightly remarks that the " theology of Rama had a great future. " The emotional attitude in the Ramayana " bears a striking resemblance to that of traditional Christianity. " Exposition of the subject throughout is brilliant and scholarly. The statement of the author, " Guha's fear that the contact of Rama's feet would change his boat into a stone has no meaning in the Bhakti context" (166) does not appear to be correct. It deserves to be reconsidered. This is a book that all Rama-lovers must own. Students of comparative religion will also be benefitted by this study.

— B. KUTUMBA RAO

Living in the Absolute [Studies in Visishtaadwaita Philosophy]: By N. C. Ramanujachary. For copies, Author, Olcott Bungalow, The Theosophical Society, Adyar, Madras-20. Price : Rs. 15.

Quintessence of the system of Visishtaadvaita Philosophy, as expounded by Sri Ramanujacharya, is presented heren a very

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lucid language. Peripheral discussions are not resorted to. The three chapters in this monograph deal with the essential teachings, the five bases for wisdom and a code for human conduct. The last chapter is a practical guide for a good life to one and all, irrespective of their faith. This is a nice introduction to Visishtadvaita system of philosophy to a lay man also.

— B. KUTUMBA RAO

Concept of Cow in The Rigveda : By Doris Srinivasan. Motilal Banarsidas, New Delhi-7. Price: Rs. 25.

The present work, a thesis for Ph. D. from Pennsylvania University, is the first ever book-length study of the concept of cow in Rig Veda from economic, ritual, mythological and epithetical angles. It offers fresh insights into life and culture in Rig Vedic age through philological analyses of the cow-terms —*aghnya*, *usraa*, *usriya*, *dhenu*, *go*, *vasa* and *stari*. The author examines a little over three hundred and fifty hymns culled from the ten *Mandalas* of *Rig Veda* to conclude that in addition to representing material well-being, the cow is a symbol through which Vedic man's knowledge of the unknown is widened. He says in fine : "Through similes and metaphors, the cow, known so well through daily observation, is able to clarify and then identify cosmic phenomena as well as gods and goddesses. Even so, there is no evidence in the text that cows are regarded as sacred, or, that a taboo against cow killing exists. Moreover, in daily life cows were slaughtered for food."

It is difficult to come across another book of such thorough documentation and authenticity. But however authentic and authoritative it appears to be, it cannot be taken as last word on the subject since it depends heavily on the nineteenth century western scholarship, and ignores the more recent native Indian Vedic scholarship, which corrects some of the mistakes committed by Saayana, Sankara *et al*, not to speak of the western scholars like Goldstucker who refused to tread the beaten track. Purely ritualistic meanings of many of the Rig Vedic hymns have been successfully repudiated by Dayananda Saraswati, Sri Aurobindo, Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni, Kapaali Sastry and Pandit Sripada Damodar Satvalekar, not to speak of the ancient Madhwacharya, propagator of dual philosophy, and Hiranya Kesi's *Grihya Sutras*. It is now well established, for example, that *Vasa* does not stand for a barren cow as the author takes it to mean and that *maamsa* need not as often does not denote 'flesh'. By far the most interesting and valuable contribution seems to be the author's interpretation of the myth of Panis and its comparison with the myth of the Vritra. In spite of its inherited

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western attitudes the book is a very important contribution to Vedic studies.

— Dr G. Srirama Murthy

Art of Indian Dancing: By Projesh Bannerji. Sterling Publishers (Pvt.) Ltd., New Delhi-16. Price : Rs. 175.

Terpsichorean art, besides being a performing art, is also a composite one consisting of dance, song and rhythm, all aesthetically blended. All these are performed with a background of colourfully set stage suited to the theme of the performance. The history of dance, its components and other allied topics have been dealt with by the author in an expert manner.

These composite arts are symbolic. Creation consists of eternal vibration (*spandana*) and movement (*sancara*) of the planets, solar systems and other innumerable stars of the universe. This is epitomised in the figure of Siva-Nataraja. The music of the spheres is symbolised in the euphonic sounds that emanate from the grand and majestic movement of the heavenly bodies. Mahesvara Sutras are the alphabet. The primeval monogrammatic sound of *Om* is also an epitome and from this emanated the *sapta svara*. Moreover these movements in dance convey to the audience the ideas (*bhavah*), emotions, feelings and sentiments. It is an art of communication. This is semantic attitudinisation — meaningful poses and postures.

Kathakali has specialised in detail and subtle movements of the body, *angabhinaya*. For palm-poses, they follow the text of *Hasta Dipika*. Its performance can be appreciated only by an initiated audience, who have studied the science of dance. Odissi's migration to the Eastern lands is dealt with and Manipuri system is narrated in detail of its technique.

Pradyumna in page 125 is not the correct name. It was Manmatha that shot the flower arrow at Siva, while the latter was in askesis and met with disaster.

For a connoisseur the book affords good reading, for an amateur it is informative and for a professional though its reading is surfeit of study yet it refreshes him.

— N. S. Krishna Murt

Buddhist Monuments of China and South-East India : By I. K. Sarma. Sandeep Prakashan, C-2/9, Community Centre, Ashok Vihar Phase II, Delhi-52. Price : Rs. 350.

Each country in the world has got its own glory while China is conspicuous by its unique glory, both secular and sacred,

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intellectual and aesthetic. Its material and non-material cultures ran like parallel lines in co-existence. Moreover, Chinese ancient patriotism did never discourage the universal fraternity and the international spirit of mutual exchange of cultures with other countries, especially India.

Dr. Sarma is a profound scholar endowed with meticulous observation and penetrating introspection — observation of the phenomenon and introspection of the noumenon and thus he is able to comprehend the shapes of the appearances as well as the mysteries of the realities—the objective exterior and the subjective interior.

The visual perception of the monuments of a country fails to reveal its past unless the perceiver has the historical knowledge of the country, its kings and the people. As the author happens to be a talented archaeologist, an art-critic and a man of letters, his monograph has become more than a mere monograph. The most interesting aspect of this monograph is its illustrations, apart from the illuminating text.

Leaving aside the prehistorical times and coming to the historical periods, ruins of Hindu temples were discovered around Quanzhou, the port town in South-East China. It is well known about the Buddhist contacts between China and India but about the Hindu links it is less known and even unknown. Dr. I. K. Sarma is able to reveal these concealed truths.

National integration is desirable, no doubt, but international integration is more than desirable and for such international integration, human integrity, humane amity and universal psychical affinity, such luminous volumes as the present one by Dr. Sarma are indispensable, especially in this nuclear age. All nationalism, all rationalism, all emotionalism should work towards re-establishing compassion, wisdom and freedom in order to annihilate the present dark forces which hanker to extinguish the triple-flame of cognition, conation and affection.

— Dr. SANJIVA DEV

The Winged Gods : By Amal Ghose. Publisded by Tagore Institute of Creative Writing, International, ' Diparun ' T-29, 7th Avenue, Besantnagar, Madras-90. Price : $ 6, £ 5.

Oscar Wilde said about his fairy tales that they were " an attempt to mirror modern life in a form more remote from reality...to deal with modern problems in a mode that is ideal and not imitative. " One might say that Amal Ghose in these short stories has tried to mirror contemporary life in India in a

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mode that is decidedly not "imitative". As the publishers' blurb says, he has tried to "explore decadence and degeneration in family and social life in particular and hellish living in general." And for this purpose he has avoided the easy, imitative mode of holding a non-distorting mirror to life or Zolaesque naturalism which resembles the technique of the newspaper reporter rather than that of a literary artist. On the other hand, Amal Ghose has achieved an effective blend of fantasy and Orwellian satire to portray life and its problems in today's India.

The most significant stories in the collection, judged from the point of view of the present situation in India, are *The Equal of the Winged Gods* and *Where Dame Luck Favours*. The former points to the way political and social life in India has been steadily deteriorating. Even the Independence Day, which was once a day of great rejoicing, is no longer celebrated with enthusiasm. *Where Dame Luck Favours* is a story about a traditional Brahmin family which has lost its moorings and fallen into evil ways. The women of the family pretend to be wealthy and an innocent woman whose only son needs expensive medical treatment in a foreign country is taken in by their hypocrisy.

Considering that the seven stories in the volume under review make really interesting reading, one would welcome many more volumes of short stories from Amal Ghose's pen.

— K. S. VENKATARAMU

Sapta Svara (An Enchiridion of seven essays on Biography, Art and Literature): By N. S. Krishna Murti. Edited by A. Venkata Raman. For copies: The Author, Mulapet, Nellore-3. Price: Rs. 15.

The very title of this slender volume indicates the aesthetic heart and tastes of the author, whose mellow muses expressed in an elegant style are sure to enrapture and enlighten any reader on Indian culture, art and literature. In the first two essays the author pays homage to Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy, "the master spirit of our age". A profile of that great savant is presented. His vast learning and culture are highlighted. Meed of praise showered upon him by eminent persons is placed before us. Above all, his likes and dislikes, his deep insights into the spirit and soul of Indian art and culture, his penchant for folk lore, myths and ancient customs all of which are symbolic, his humility, genius and selflessness are all brought to the forum.

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The third essay sheds fresh light in the significance of the Indian art of portraiture, that is indicated by Bhasa in his *Pratima Nataka* in the scene representing the portrait gallery. This is pointed out for the first time by Dr. AKC. Students of Samskrit drama should need this essay. The fourth essay on Chitralekhana is an authentic treatise on Indian painting in all its aspects, based on ancient Samskrit works on Chitralekhana. Outlines of Bharata's Natyasastra, its theory and practice form the subject of the fifth essay. The sixth essay deals with a dance concert described by Srinatha in his *Palnati Veeracharitram*. The last essay presents a panoramic view of Godavari valley. A biographical sketch of the author is appended to the text proper. All lovers of Indian culture and art should make this work their own and treasure it.

— "KAASHYAPA"

SAMSKRIT AND TELUGU

Lalitaa Trishati Bhaashyam: Telugu translation by G. Krishna Murty. Bhuvana Vijayam Publications, Kaspavaari street, Governorpet, Vijayawada-2. Price: Rs. 20.

"Lalitaa Trishati Stotra" needs no introduction to the devotees of the goddess Lalita. That Sri Shankara thought it fit to comment in detail on this speaks volumes of its importance. This book under review is an authentic and almost literal translation of the Bhaashya and the introduction and concluding verses of the Stotra proper. Three important features contributed to the excellence and usefulness of the book are — (1) This translation contains explanatory notes also on the technical and significant words and phrases in the original. (2) Telugu translation of a small text "Srividya Dipika" by Agastya is added separately. This expounds the meanings of the three parts of the "Panchadasi" Mantra. (3) Above all, an introduction of forty pages is a masterly treatise on Srividyaa and its alliance with Advaita philosophy and Yoga, concepts of Siva, Isvara, Tripurasundari, Mantras, Varnas and their significance. Six Chakras, Hrimkara, Omkara, Paraa, Pasyanti and Vaikhari sounds and Shabda Brahman, etc., are explained, as found expended in "Prapanchasaara Tantra" of Shankara, and other texts. All these make this book an indispensable one for all the aspirants in this field.

— B. K. SASTRY

Bharati Kala Tarangini: By Mangalagiri Prameela Devi, Hindu College, Machilipatnam. Price: Rs. 14.

The essays herein touch upon the musical and literary achievements of great Masters like Narayana Teertha, Munipalli

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Subrahmanya Kavi of *Adhyatma Ramayana* fame, Tyagaraja, Annamacharya, Ramadas and some modern composers too. The author exudes a deep scholarship in literature and musicology and has an eye for the finesse. However, lesser deleniation on the commonplace and familiar ideas would have enhanced the impact.

— Dr. DHARA RAMANADHA SASTRY

Hamsaladeevi : By Ravoori Venkata Satynarayana Rao. Diviseema Sahiti Samiti, Gandhi Kshetram, Avanigadda-521 123. Price : Rs. 5.

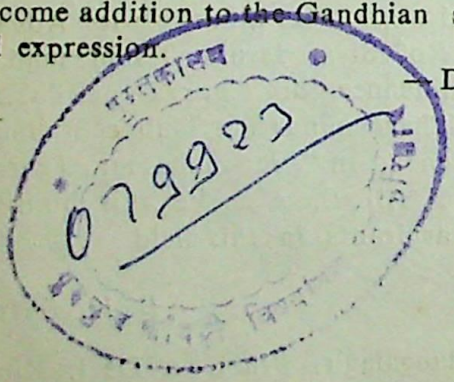
This novelette with a thin story line revolves around a composer, his father and a dansuese. The romance between the composer and the dansuese, its initial flourish, subsequent setback and final sublimation in the cause of divine service are some of the threads woven into a fine fabric of this lyrical novel. The author's museful association with Diviseema of Krishna District with its natural beauty and cultural splendour pervades all through the novelette and adds to its depth and grandeur. A fine example of atmosphere and lyrical fiction.

— Dr. DHARA RAMANADHA SASTRY

Gandheya Margam— Tatwikata : By Yetukuri Balarama Murthy. Gandheya Samaja Sevamandali, Gandhi Kshetram, Avanigadda-521123. Price : Rs. 10.

In this small book, a compilation of Radio talks, the author, an eminent journalist and historian of Marxist hue, studies the life of Mahatma with an accent on philosophic truths that inspired him, especially *Bhagavadgita*. Mahatma's failures and successes are no doubt chronicled but how Gandhiji emerged as a Sthitaprajna under the tutelege of Gita is of paramount importance here. A welcome addition to the Gandhian studies with clarity in thought and expression.

— DR. DHARA RAMANADHA SASTRY



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